Arizona School Improvement Guide

Examining Resource Reallocation

Implementing the Plan

Developing and Writing the Plan

Developing and Allocating

Involving Parents and Community

Exploring Effective Practices

Prioritizing and Translating

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Introduction

The Arizona School Improvement Guide for Arizona schools was developed by the Arizona Department of Education to guide school improvement teams through the complex process of change. The Manual provides guidance for establishing the team, collecting baseline information, setting and prioritizing goals, exploring effective practices, making plans for and allocating resources for implementation, and recycling through the process.

The Arizona School Improvement process is adaptable to a number of contexts. It can be used to focus targeted assistance, as a schoolwide reform tool, and as a guide for participating in the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration (CSRD) program. The manual walks the user through a process that is research based and is grounded in the experiences of the ADE and change consultants who have had success with implementing change in schools across the nation in rural, suburban and urban settings.

The purpose of this guide is to assist school improvement teams in producing plans that are meaningful, thorough, and effective for changing schools in ways that will benefit all students. The guide should be viewed as a general tool for school improvement, not a rigid set of activities that must be followed rigorously. Local contextual considerations will always have to be accommodated in an effective, stakeholder-driven planning process.

Throughout the document, there are useful questions that will help you assess your progress along the way. A series of worksheets are also provided for the school improvement team to use throughout the process. Finally, appendices relating to Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration program and using data for making decisions are also provided.

Establishing the Team

Chapter 1

Establishing a Team for Self-Evaluation

Continuous improvement means change – and requires strong, compelling leadership at many levels. The team that you assemble to lead the change will need to play active leadership roles while at the same time, ensuring that those who will make the changes "own" the process. The shared vision must be translated into personal visions for all of those who are involved so that they are committed to its success.

Creating the Leadership Team

The team that is selected to facilitate the change process will need to have a combination of skills to be successful. Most schools select the leadership team in one of three ways:
- Handpicking or recruiting members;
- Selecting members from a pool of volunteers; or
- Allowing schools or departments to select their own representatives.

There are advantages and disadvantages to each of these approaches. Whichever approach is taken, however, it is important that the team include representatives of each key stakeholder group. The team should also be large enough to promote rich and deep analytical thinking, brainstorming, and small enough to encourage dialogue. Most schools have planning teams of eight to ten, although some have as many as 25.

It is important to include the principal, other administrators, teachers, staff, parents, and community members on the team. Some schools also include School Board members, union representatives, federal programs staff, district curriculum or professional development staff, research and assessment experts, special education, personnel, and others with programs or services offered at the school. Diversity is also important. Make sure you have both males and females, people of differing ages, ethnicities/races, and experience levels included.

One way to decide who to select for the team is to consider essential characteristics of individuals. Consider:
- *Who are the opinion leaders?* These tend to be the individuals who set the tone for change through their expertise, charisma, or friendships among individuals on the faculty or staff.
- *Who are the experts?* These individuals possess certain skills that you will want to have present on the team. As a group, for example, you may wish to have expertise in writing, needs assessment, finance, action planning, content areas, local politics, facilitation, technology, strategy development, and/or critical thinking.
- *Who are the doers?* These individuals can be counted on to deliver and will help the group achieve momentum and inspire confidence that continuous improvement will occur.

- *Who has valuable perspectives to offer?* Some individuals are particularly creative and some handle details exceptionally well. Some have institutional histories, some resolve conflicts, and some have particularly good relations with families and communities being served by the school. Each type of individual adds something beneficial to the team.

The group that you select will be together for a period of time and may experience challenges together. The process requires both time and energy. The group will sometimes face criticism and experience the "loneliness" of leadership when resistance is met. It is important, then, to select a group that will forge strong relationships with each other and their non-selected peers. They will be the visible reminders that the school is engaged in continuous improvement and change. Choose well, for it will pay off in the future.

The Leadership Challenge

The leadership group will be tasked with designing a planning process and conducting a self-evaluation as first steps in the continuous change process. Before a planning process even begins, however, it will be important for the leadership team to make decisions. These decisions need to be made about communicating with and involving others, identifying key parameters and timelines, deciding how the team will operate, and developing a process for creating a continuous improvement plan.

Plan for Involving Stakeholder Groups

The plan to communicate and involve others starts by ensuring that you have identified all key stakeholder groups. The leadership team should either directly represent them if they are drawn from their ranks or should designate liaisons to them so that the groups have a voice in decision making and are well informed about the continuous improvement process and outcomes.

Identifying Parameters for the Improvement Process

School teams often face parameters to the planning process that they need to understand before embarking on continuous improvement. Some parameters to consider are the following:
- Is there a deadline for the creation of a plan?
- Are other schools being asked to create plans, too, and do all the plans need to be aligned and/or are the plans in competition with each other for funds?
- Does the plan need to align with a district plan?
- Is there a budget restriction for both the planning group and the continuous improvement plan that is created?
- Is there a timeline for budgeting?
- Are there pending grant application times that must be taken into account?
- Are there upcoming events that can be used as catalysts or will serve as barriers to the planning and implementation process?

Team Operations

Once the team is selected, it will be important for them to discuss how they are to operate and make decisions before they actually begin the school improvement process. Many teams like to set ground rules for discussion. Others like to assign team roles such as recorder, timekeeper, and discussion facilitators. Many groups set time limits for discussions and meetings.

Teams often decide to use outsiders (people who do not work for the school or district) as facilitators or resource people. Outsiders can help by asking thoughtful, provocative questions, observing and commenting on the group processes, raising issues that would be politically difficult for others to raise, reminding the team about communicating with and including others in decision making, critiquing the process, and critiquing the plan. Outsiders could include administrators or teachers from other districts, university faculty, businesspersons, or outside consultants.

The section at the end of this chapter provides some guidelines for developing and using ground rules. It also provides some sample ground rules that might be useful for your team. Once your team develops its ground rules, include them at the bottom of Form 1 in the section on guidelines for team operation.

Process Used to Develop the Plan

Generally, leadership teams start by asking a series of key questions to help define their work. Such questions may include:
- What is the purpose of this team?
- Who are our stakeholders?
- When are you expected to finish a plan?
- What inputs will you need for our decisions?
- What decisions have already been made?
- How do you fit with existing groups and decision makers?
- Which groups will support us and which will oppose and/or criticize us?
- With whom should you communicate and by what means?
- What resources and supports are at our disposal?
- What represents a critical mass for us in our decision making?
- How will you resolve our differences when they exist?

Oftentimes, once these decisions are made, a public announcement or kickoff event is planned to initiate the planning process. This serves to "demystify" the process and let people know what can be expected as part of the school improvement process.

Common Errors That Leadership Teams Make

There are many challenges in leading people through change, and the change process can take a long time. Common errors that are made can slow down momentum or cancel out progress. Kotter (1995) identifies the following as the critical mistakes that are most often made during a change process:

Error #1:   Not Establishing a Great Enough Sense of Urgency

The leadership team must communicate regularly and sometimes dramatically, to rally faculty, staff, parents, students, and other partners in the change process to motivate and sustain momentum. Most people who are successful in creating a sense of urgency identify crises, potential crises, or opportunities. Typically this involves a frank discussion of potentially unpleasant facts: declining student test scores, teacher turnover, absenteeism, lack of motivation, and other problems that arise in the school. Many times, groups use outside consultants to deliver these messages, since the group has a tendency to "shoot the messenger". No matter how this is done, it is important to make the status quo look more dangerous than launching into the unknown. Kotter (1995), believes that the sense of urgency is high enough when 75% of the school's leadership or faculty is convinced that "business as usual" is unacceptable. Without the sense of urgency by a critical mass of key people, the change process can be at jeopardy in the future.

Error #2:   Not Creating A Powerful Enough Guiding Coalition

The leadership team that you assemble is critical to success of the change process. There needs to be a shared commitment to excellent performance and to the process used to reach performance goals. The leadership team needs to be comprised of "powerful" people- those with authority, expertise, information, reputations, and relationships. The team should include people from every level of the school, not just the "hierarchy" since it will be important to be representative of all groups in the school. The team will need to help establish common definitions of problems and opportunities, shared visions, and commitment to processes. This means that they will need to create trust and avenues for dialogue, decision making, and commitment to decisions.

Error #3:   Lacking a Vision

The leadership team will need to formulate a vision that is compelling, one that in effect, becomes a call to action. It cannot simply be a statement of the rise in test scores or decrease in absenteeism. Rather, it must help clarify the motivation to change and the direction in which the school is moving. Often vision statements are a combination of tough analysis and wishful thinking. The best vision statements are those that can be communicated quickly, and can get a reaction that signifies both understanding and interest.

Error #4:   Undercommunicating the Vision by a Factor of Ten

To be successful, the vision needs to be a part of everyday communications. In routine discussions and daily activities, team members should talk about how proposed solutions fit into the big picture and into daily lives. All existing communication channels should be used to inform and motivate people. In everyday activities, leaders should "walk the talk" of the vision by consciously being the symbol of commitment. As Kotter (1995), reminds us, "nothing undermines change more than behavior by important individuals that is not consistent with their words."

Error #5:   Not Removing Obstacles to the New Vision

Communication of the vision is only the first step. There must also be a conscious removal of obstacles or barriers that could prevent the vision from becoming a reality. Sometimes the obstacle is organizational structure such as the way the classrooms are organized or staff are assigned to positions. Sometimes appraisal systems force people to choose between the school's vision and their own self-interest. Sometimes there are forces of the status quo that scare people or send messages that this, too, is a passing fad. Pay attention to these obstacles and do what you can to remove them.

Error #6:   Not Systematically Planning For and Creating Short Term Wins

Change can be exhausting, and without benchmarks that can be celebrated, leaders and implementers can become fatigued. The leadership team should actively look for ways to attain clear performance objectives, establish interim goals, and reward the people involved with recognition and other valued reinforcements. Commitments to produce short term wins will help create the urgency levels and foster the kind of analytical thinking and motivation needed to clarify and revise the vision and make it continuously compelling.

Error #7:   Declaring Victory Too Soon

While celebrating attainment of goals is a key to success, it is equally important not to declare that the war is won. Until changes become part of the school's culture, they are fragile and subject to regression. Interestingly, as Kotter(1995), points out, it is a combination of the innovators and early adopters and the resistors that create premature victory celebrations. In their enthusiasm for progress, initiators sometimes go overboard and resistors seize every opportunity to stop the change. Weary faculty allow themselves to be convinced that they are finished. Change comes to a halt and tradition once again takes hold. Leaders need to be particularly cautious here and draw on their own credibility to tackle the next set of challenges. They should take on different system components that are not yet aligned with the continuous improvement process, or, take the next step, paying a great deal of attention to the developmental process and to who is on board, helping them to become leaders in the next stages of continuous improvement.

Error #8:   Not Anchoring Changes in the School's Culture

Change becomes entrenched when it is part of the culture or simply the way that things are done in the school. Until new behaviors and practices are rooted in the social norms and values of the school, they are subject to degradation as soon as pressure to change is removed. Part of the stage of incorporating change into culture is to point out to individuals how the new approaches, behaviors, and attitudes have increased performance. This should not be left to chance since, on their own; people may make inaccurate links. Rather, there should be time in joint meetings and in other means of communication to identify results that have occurred and properly attribute them to the change efforts. Also, it will become important for the change to become so much a part of the culture that a turnover of the principal does not affect the change.

Form 1

Building Self Evaluation Team

Directions:

List the names and positions of the self-evaluation team below. Also, list each member's roles and responsibilities.

Representative Group	Individual Names
Teachers	
Families	
School Administrators	
Support Personnel (counselors, nurses, librarians, etc.)	
Other Staff (security personnel, custodians)	

Guidelines for Team Operations

Guidelines for Using Ground Rules

- Write them as a team.

- Review them often
  - ➢ at the beginning of the meeting.
  - ➢ assess at the end of the meeting..

- Post them in the meeting room.

- Challenge behaviors that violate them.

- Revise them as needed.

- Give new members opportunities for input.

Sample Ground Rules

We will:

- ✓ Meet only when there is a meaningful agenda.
- ✓ Start and end on time.
- ✓ Keep focused on the agenda.
- ✓ Participate to build consensus.
- ✓ Check for understanding and make decisions in writing.
- ✓ Follow through on decisions.
- ✓ Put an idea out for critiquing and talk about the idea rather than attack the person behind the idea.
- ✓ Believe that we are all competent and that every one has something to contribute.

Taking Stock

Chapter 2

Taking Stock of Progress

Background

It is important to think about reform systemically and take stock of what is going on so that you can measure the kinds of progress you make. Measuring where you are at the beginning of an effort to reform a school or *creating a baseline* is a critical step in the change process. If you do not know where you started, it is difficult to know how far you have come.

Part of the process of taking stock involves the use of information about your external and internal environment. The internal environment is the school. It consists of students, staff, facilities, resources, and other factors. The process of taking stock of the internal environment is called internal scanning.

The external environment is everything outside of the school – the local community, the region, and the state and the factors within the external environment that either affect your results or are targets for your efforts (e.g., increasing parent involvement). The process of understanding the current state of affairs in the environment outside of the school is called external scanning.

Many forms of data related to both the external and the internal environments already exist. Other data will need to be collected in order to understand the school. The idea here is to organize all existing and new data into a comprehensive look at the school that will inform the planning process.

Existing Data Sources

Information from internal and external sources is useful for making decisions about what will happen in schools. There are numerous collections of useful data already in existence for schools to use for making decisions. Here is a list of some of the more helpful data sources for internal and external scanning purposes.

Student Achievement

You receive several achievement reports annually including Stanford 9, AIMS, and Measure of Academic Progress (MAP). Data from the Stanford 9 show national percentile ranks as well as NCEs. The AIMS test results indicate students who fall into the Falls Far Below, Approaches, Meets and Exceeds the Standard categories. Finally, MAP reports, also based on the Stanford 9, include the percent of expected gain for each school, grade level and subject area.

Student Work

Standardized tests are only one way in which student performance is assessed. It can also be measured by portfolio assessments, alternative assessments, report cards, teacher-made tests, and a variety of other tools. Report card grades are particularly valuable because they are an indication of student performance over a period of time and tell you how well your teachers are predicting students will do on tests. Arizona's six trait writing assessment also provides important information on students' progress in writing.

District Reports

District reports provide a unique context for determining strengths and weaknesses and help staff in schools gain new insights about their local community. Typically, these reports contain disaggregated test scores, information about the demographic characteristics of the students, and district philosophy and goals. Districts often have detailed plans for improvement or reform in their consolidated plans including how federal resources will work together to help all children succeed.

School or Campus Reports

Arizona has a sophisticated data reporting system. The Student Accountability Information System (SAIS) has information about school mission, organization and philosophy, instructional programs, school/academic goals, enrollment, site council membership, staffing, shared responsibilities, transportation, calendar information, resources, and indicators of success. Honors, safety, and achievement on the Stanford Achievement Test, Ninth Edition, are available from the SAIS.

Census Bureau Data

The U. S. Bureau of the Census is an excellent source for demographic data. A great deal of their information is easily accessible online at no cost, and a number of useful publications are produced. It is helpful to explore their web site and to make personal contact with information offices. They have information about population broken down by age, race/ethnicity, gender, language proficiency, income, and occupations.

Department of Labor Data

The U. S. Department of Labor has unique information about occupations and industries in local communities. Predictions about growth at the national, regional, and local levels are helpful for understanding local employer needs, both now and in the future. There is information about specific jobs in industries and occupations, as well as major employment categories. The numbers of people in a particular job category are available, as well as characteristics of the work force.

Data from Other Sources

County and local health offices and the state health department are useful sources of information about births, teenage pregnancies, drug use, and other social issues is helpful for providing school based services or for planning community-based services for school-aged children and their families. Banks and Chambers of Commerce in larger cities often conduct community scans and produce helpful documents. Community planning offices can provide information about demographics and employment sector growth. Universities and local government entities also collect valuable information.

Profiling Your School

The amount of data available at just one school can be overwhelming. Knowing where to start is a big step. One strategy for a place to start is the construction of a school profile after existing data are located. The profile serves as a summary of the key contextual conditions in the building, and is an efficient way to understand the school. It is also useful for continuous improvement planning and proposal development because it is a snapshot of where the school is at a given point in time. Following is a sample profile that helps with organizing the large array of existing data available about a school. A profile can be organized in any number of ways, this example serves as a starting point that should be modified to meet local contextual needs. Data for this profile were obtained from the Arizona School Report Card and other sources on the ADE Web Site (http://www.ade.state.az.us), district reports and the Great Schools web site (http://greatschools.net).

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Fiction Middle School, Imaginary Place ISD

Student Achievement

School Results: Spring, 2000 Stanford Achievement Test, 9th Edition

	Percentile Rank Scores		
	Reading	**Mathematics**	**Language**
6th	21	25	15
7th	16	28	17
8th	20	25	17

State Results: Spring, 2000 Stanford Achievement Test, 9th Edition

	Percentile Rank Scores		
	Reading	**Mathematics**	**Language**
6th	53	60	44
7th	52	56	54
8th	53	56	49

School Results: Grade 8 Arizona Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS)

	Percent of Students in Each Category		
	Mathematics	Reading	Writing
Falls far below	91%	73%	45%
Approaches	9%	14%	44%
Meets	1%	13%	11%
Exceeds	0%	0%	0%

State Results: Grade 8 Arizona Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS)

	Percent of Students in Each Category		
	Mathematics	Reading	Writing
Falls far below	50%	30%	45%
Approaches	34%	18%	44%
Meets	11%	38%	11%
Exceeds	5%	14%	0%

School Results: Measure of Academic Progress (MAP)

MAP Reading 1998-1999

	Star Rating	One Year's Growth
Grade 3-4	2	Yes
Grade 4-5	1	No
Grade 5-6	4	Yes
Grade 6-7	1	No
Grade 7-8	4	Yes

MAP Math 1998-1999

	Star Rating	One Year's Growth
Grade 3-4	5	Yes
Grade 4-5	3	No
Grade 5-6	5	Yes
Grade 6-7	3	Yes
Grade 7-8	1	No

MAP 1999-2000

	% Expected Growth - Reading	% Expected Growth - Math
Grade 3-4	101	161
Grade 4-5	72	100
Grade 5-6	48	173
Grade 6-7	117	87
Grade 7-8	42	65

Demographics

School Attendance:	89.0%
State Attendance:	93.4%
School Promotion Rate:	93.0%
State Promotion Rate:	95.5%
Graduation Rate (9-12)	95.0%
Drop Out Rate (7-12)	6.6%

Teacher Education

Bachelors	59%
Masters	41%
Doctorate	0%
Other	0%

Teacher Experience

3 years or less	32%
4 to 9 years	37%
10 years or more	32%

Ethnicity of Students

American Indian	6%
Asian	0%
African American	1%
Hispanic	92%
White	2%

School Free/Reduced Lunch:	89%
State Free/Reduced Lunch:	52%

Enrollment:		555
Female	52%	289
Male	48%	266
Total Attending ADM:		592.27

Calculated Weighted Counts	685.85

Per Pupil Expenditures

Classroom Instruction	$2,883
Supplies	$144
Administration	$634
Support Services - Students	$224
Other Support and Operations	$2,245
Total Per Pupil Expenditures	**$6,130**

Class Size and Extended School Day Allocation:	$174,847.80

From this sample profile, several useful observations can be made. For example, while the scores in the school seem to be low, they are making progress in reading, particularly for students who were in the seventh grade last year and who are in the eighth grade this year. (Five stars indicate that these students improved dramatically). This is particularly encouraging for a school with high numbers of students eligible for free and reduced lunch. Per pupil expenditure breakdowns indicate that over half of the budget is spent on classroom instruction. The school will also have an estimated $175,000 for class size and extended school day modifications.

Needs Assessments

Comprehensive needs assessments are required for schoolwide planning purposes. A background knowledge of needs assessments conducted in the past can serve as a starting point for future activities. Most needs assessments include analyses of student performance data; teacher, parent, and student surveys, demographic reports, and other data that are helpful in understanding strengths and needs of the school.

Before undertaking new data collection activity, it is useful to search out these existing data sources, determine their usefulness and how current they are, and extract major themes before undertaking new data collection activity.

Disaggregation of Data

Disaggregation of data is a powerful tool, particularly with regard to student achievement data. Disaggregation by race/ethnicity, gender, national origin, socioeconomic status or handicapping conditions is a useful way to extract what the data can tell you. Data should be broken down by grade level. Other types of disaggregation are helpful as well. For example, it is not enough to say that reading scores are low. It is more helpful to indicate that reading scores are low because students don't do well on test questions involving inference or more difficult vocabulary.

Some questions that are important for the school can only be answered if you disaggregate your data. Data disaggregation simply means that data are pulled apart by different categories, such as males and females, high and low socioeconomic status, or served/not served by special programs such as Title I. By pulling data apart, you can examine the trends that occur within and between groups. Title I requirements provide some guidance for how to disaggregate data. They require that data be disaggregated by:
♦   Gender;
♦   Socioeconomic status (usually free/reduced price lunch eligibility);
♦   Race/ethnicity;
♦   Disabling conditions; and
♦   Program services (like Title I, Title VII bilingual, or migrant education).

Data disaggregation is a powerful technique for exploring data. For example, disaggregation of achievement data by race/ethnicity might reveal that students who speak English as their second language may do relatively well in mathematics, but have trouble in areas related to language skills. Disaggregation by gender may reveal disparate mathematics achievement between boys and girls, particularly in the higher grades. With this kind of information, the school can make informed decisions about how best to increase academic achievement for all groups of students.

Taking Inventory and Identifying New Data Collection Needs

In addition to the vast array of data sources that are readily available about a building, it is often helpful to take inventory of what is available, what is desirable and what is not needed. The following chart is helpful for identifying the types of data that might be useful to collect for different goals related to your school's plan.

Data Collection Needs			
Data Source	**Have It**	**Need It**	**Don't Want It**
Student Surveys			
Parent Surveys			
Teacher Surveys			
Interviews of Students			
Interviews of Teachers			
Interviews of Parents			
Focus Groups of Students			
Focus Groups of Teachers			
Focus Groups of Parents			
Gifted/Talented Enrollments			
Advanced Placement Examination Results			
Graduation/Dropout Rates			
Surveys of Graduates			
LEP Student Outcomes			
Special Education Outcomes			
Disaggregated Gateway Course Enrollment (e.g., Algebra, Chemistry, Physics)			
NAEP Results			
National Merit Scholarship Finalists			
Preschool attendance rates			
Parental Involvement			
ACT/SAT scores			
Staff Characteristics			
Classroom Observations			
Other			

New Sources of Data

The last section demonstrated how data that are already in existence can be useful for informing decisions. However, as the process unfolds, it is often necessary to collect new data to address specific concerns, as the inventory of data sources indicates.

Student Surveys

Asking students how they feel about the school, what they like and dislike, what they think about their teachers, and what they think about what they are learning provides unique and powerful insights for school improvement teams. It is often useful to ask them what they think about assessments they take, what they think their teachers feel is important, and how they feel about other people in the school building. The answers to these questions provide insight into school climate. Students can also be asked about how their parents get involved in the school and what people in the community think about the students in the school. RMC has additional information available about conducting surveys (http://www.rmcdenver.com).

Parent Surveys

Parents can be surveyed for a number of reasons. The school may desire general feedback about how the school is functioning or how they think the school can be improved. Sometimes there may be a specific reason for gathering information from parents, such as a needs assessment for a grant proposal. Results from these surveys are useful for a number of purposes and can inform school improvement teams about important issues and concerns.

Teacher Surveys

Input from teachers should be solicited since their buy-in to the improvement process is critical to its success. There may be a special project or program, an annual survey, or informal assessments of teacher opinions, attitudes, and beliefs, and their opinions priority needs for improvement. Especially important here is to understand teachers' beliefs about how students learn and their expectations for student achievement. This will help you to focus your improvement effort. Teachers should also be polled before any reform strategy is adopted that will impact them directly.

Interviews

Interviews are usually conducted as one-on-one experiences with many open-ended questions. The same types of design rules apply with interviews as the ones for surveys. You should have clear information goals in mind, ask only those questions that are needed, and ask the questions to establish rapport.

It is particularly important for interviewers to be careful about influencing responses. Simple body language like leaning forward or nodding your head, for example, can influence the results that you get, since many respondents keep talking to the interviewer.

Data analysis for interviews is typically more time consuming since the data are often in narrative form rather than as closed ended answers that can be easily quantified. Most school people use interviews to get impressions rather than definitive data. However, narrative data such as this usually provides richer data, and wonderful examples to illustrate

the patterns that are discovered. Care should be exerted in the analysis, however, so that the conclusions are not influenced by the opinions of the analyst.

Focus Groups

Focus groups are data gathering events that typically include eight to ten respondents who share similar roles such as teachers or parents. In a focus group situation, open ended questions are posed and probed to see the varieties of opinions that exist.

Focus groups are used to gain insight or to explore things and are typically not used when specific measurement is needed. A focus group moderator facilitates the discussion, seeing that everyone who has an opinion gets the chance to voice it. Moderation is a skill that does not come easily, but some guidance is available (http://www.rmcdenver.com).

Classroom Observations

Observations are often used to collect data on classrooms or particular behaviors such as instructional practices or time on task. Again, it is wise to start by identifying specific questions to be answered by the observation, then watching and documenting exactly what is observed. Interpretation of the data frequently involves some kind of coding scheme and an analysis of patterns that are observed. Many analyses also include examples or a "vignette" that gives the reader a sense of what was observed. Resources for this are available at RMC (http://www.rmcdenver.com).

Other Sources of Data

There are many other types of information that are useful for taking stock. Examples include gifted and talented program enrollments, advanced placement examination results, graduation/dropout rates, surveys of graduates, outcomes for students whose first language is not English, and outcomes for special education students.

The RMC Quality Review Process is also another option for collecting data about schools. A series of self-scored rubrics related to nine different categories that have been developed based upon research related to student achievement. The categories include leadership, school climate, planning, monitoring and using data for improvement, providing opportunities for all children to learn, implementation of curriculum and standards, classroom teaching and learning, professional development, family and community involvement and coordination of resources. More information is available at (http://www.rmcdenver.com).

It is worth mentioning that tracking your progress is a helpful activity. It allows you to celebrate your accomplishments, even in the short term, and helps you focus your efforts toward reaching your goals. To help you take stock of your progress, it is helpful to look at where you were, where you are now, and where you are going. A worksheet is provided here for that purpose.

Form 2

Summary Sheet for Taking Stock of Progress

Directions: Write two or three sentences that summarize your progress in each of the areas below.

Topic	Data Source	Major Patterns in the Data	Baseline Indicator

Deepening Understanding

Chapter 3

Deepening Understanding

What is the next step after the data have been collected? Data do not become information until they are processed. Examining data from a number of perspectives reveals unique patterns, insights and leads to further questions. It can take a considerable amount of time to collect data about a school. It is also important to spend some time working with the data after they have been collected.

Working with Data

Working with data is the one best way to learn about what they have to communicate. It is through the process of exploring what to collect, how to display or describe what is collected and identification of additional data collection needs that one becomes familiar with what the issues are for a school. The use of data for decision making in schools is where its largest potential impact upon student achievement exists.

Why Use Data?

Data are important for decision makers. They allow you to:
♦   Replace hunches with facts;
♦   Identify root causes of problems so that you can address the problem and not just the symptom;
♦   Understand current and future needs of students, teachers, parents, and the community so that you can target your resources and services;
♦   Know if your goals are being accomplished through current practices;
♦   Anticipate the ways in which schools and the community will change and plan for the types of educational programs and expertise that will be needed in the future; and
♦   Understand the impact of your efforts.

What Do the Data Tell Us?

It is very important at this stage of the improvement process for team members to have a clear understanding of what the needs assessment data show. Too often, teams embark upon solutions without a clear understanding of the problems that they are trying to solve. Determining the root cause of a problem is an essential step that must be completed before problem solving strategies are formulated. Guessing is not sufficient or appropriate. The first step is to discover the nature of challenges facing the school. Second, it is imperative to explore the causes of those challenges. In order to get a clearer understanding of the data, it may be useful to ask some clarifying questions. Here are some suggested questions:

•   What do we <u>know</u> as a result of examining these data?
•   What do we <u>think</u> as a result of examining these data?
•   What <u>don't</u> we know as a result of examining these data?

- What do we <u>want</u> to know as a result of examining these data?
- How does/will these data help us improve instruction?

Identifying Root Causes

When looking at data, it is essential to get at the root causes of problems and trends (Holcomb, 1996). As a result of asking the kinds of questions described earlier, a team will have a better understanding of some initial focus areas in which to begin more in-depth exploration of effective practices. If the answers to these questions do not provide a clearer focus, it may be necessary to use a problem identification tool to get to the root cause of the issues identified in the needs assessment. Either the fishbone analysis or the "5 Whys" can be helpful in these instances (Senge et al., 1994).

The Japanese employ a method of asking "why" five times. This is one method for searching out the root cause of a problem. The following clarifies the process.

Five Whys

Problem Statement: (e.g., high student absenteeism; low student motivation; low scores in comprehension).

Why do you think this occurs?

And why do you think your previous statement occurs?

And why do you think this occurs?

And why do you think this occurs?

And why do you think this occurs?

Another method for getting to root causes is the Fishbone Cause and Effect Analyses. A specific problem or issue is put at the head of the "fish," and causes for the problem are brainstormed. Then solutions are generated after causes are identified and narrowed down through group processes. The technique is particularly helpful when the team wants to understand a problem and how it became a problem. By determining the most important factors related to the problem, the best places to intervene, or "leverage points" can be identified (Holcomb, 1996).

Following is a template for the process, using student absenteeism as an example. Potential causes are brainstormed for student absenteeism, in a way that is not judgmental about the merit of any particular statement. These statements might be potential causes like illness, interference with work schedule, lack of transportation, truancy, or doctor's appointments. The causes are listed on the "bones" of the fish. Then, discussion about the most pertinent causes is undertaken, and they are identified.

FISHBONE CAUSE AND EFFECT ANALYSES

What factors contribute to…

Student Absenteeism

Translation into Needs Statements

Once data are collected, worked with and causes for problems are identified, it is time to turn it into information that will inform decisions. Before decisions can be made about solutions, needs should be identified. Here is one example of an identified need and the data that point toward the need.

Need	Supporting Data
Students need to have a well-structured early childhood education experience to develop literacy skills in elementary school.	♦ Only 18 percent of the students in our school had an early childhood education experience, according to parent surveys; ♦ Only 15 percent of the students in our school meet state reading proficiency levels in the early grades; ♦ Assessments of writing samples indicate low levels of vocabulary acquisition for three-fourths of the students in the school; and ♦ Teacher interviews reveal that the students who are the best readers were more likely to have been involved in formal early childhood education experiences, such as Head Start or preschool.

In the example above, the focus of the goal is instructional. Of course, it is desirable to focus on one or two instructional goals that have been identified by the data. It is also desirable to have possible to have one or two organizational goals as well. The following example illustrates how needs assessment data might be used to define an organizational goal.

Need	Supporting Data
The school needs to minimize the time wasted between classes, the disruptions to daily classroom activity, and absenteeism.	◆ An observation of classes in the building indicated that only about 37 percent of the students were on task at any given time; ◆ An examination of the school bell schedule indicates that about 45 minutes of the school day are used for students to pass between classes; ◆ Attendance records indicate that over half of the students are pulled out of the school for doctor and dental appointments at least three times a year; ◆ Teachers report that assemblies and extracurricular activities take about six hours per month of valuable instruction time.

Again, it is wise to focus on at least one instruction related goal and one organizational goal. This allows for some coordination of effort and increases the probability for success, which is an important component of the school change process.

Appreciative Inquiry

It is easy to become discouraged through identification of problems and causes of those problems, particularly if a school is under pressure to improve test scores. Another approach worth mentioning is appreciative inquiry (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987; Curran, 1991; Hammond, 1996; Bushe, 1995). It is a powerful tool for change because it focuses on the positive aspects of a situation.

Teams engaged in appreciative inquiry are typically asked to recall a time when they were in a situation where they were asked to focus on the good things that are happening. Team members describe these situations in detail, and common threads are sought across settings. This puts the spotlight on strengthening what is already working. Such an approach creates energy and enthusiasm, develops openness and involvement, and develops the atmosphere best suited for generating creative solutions. Then, a set of "provocative propositions" are developed. The following worksheet (adapted from Hammond, 1996) illustrates how this might be used.

Sample Questions and "Provocative Propositions"

1. Tell me/us a story about a time when people in your school or on your team really collaborated well. What made that possible?

2. Tell me/us a story about a time when you had a really gratifying experience in working with, or were really proud of, your colleagues at your school or on your team. What made that possible?

3. Tell me/us a story about a time when you really felt effective in your work at the school or on a team. What made that possible?

4. Tell me/us a story about a time when you really felt you had a major, positive influence or impact on your students or your planning team. What made that possible?

5. Tell me/us a story about a time when you feel that your school or team really performed well as a system. What made that possible?

6. Tell me/us a story about a time at your school or on your team when you really felt empowered and supported by an external source. What made that possible?

7. Tell me/us a story about something you witnessed, heard of, or participated in at your school or on your team that resulted in a fundamental change from an old way of doing things to a new and improved way of doing things. What made that possible?

8. Other (specify): What made that possible?

The "what made that possible" questions asked after each of the main questions are answered serve to identify the common threads across the stories. These can then serve as a springboard for identifying levers of change in the school. Features of situations, key stakeholders in these situations, the "what and how," the "why and when," and implementation considerations can then be explored through this process as the team makes plans for change.

Data do not become information until they are processed. Information is power! Using data wisely for planning, reporting, and evaluating helps inform good decision making. Through the recycling process, it is possible to see the impact of the decisions made.

Setting Goals

Chapter 4

Setting Rigorous Accountability Goals

Accountability Goals

Setting accountability goals is a complex process. Typically, goals are dictated by the state or by local school boards. For example, for Title I, all schools are expected to make adequate yearly progress. The Arizona Department of Education sets goals for the Title I program and sends a printout each year that shows whether your students achieved at expected levels and made adequate progress.

The goals that you set for your school first and foremost must address student achievement. You need to examine the scores for AIMS and the scores in the adequate yearly progress report and then set your goals for improvement for the next year. In addition, you may wish to establish goals for student writing using the Six Trait Writing Rubric, student attendance, graduation rates, or other indicators of student performance.

Since goals form the foundation of an effective plan, it is important that they reflect these criteria:

- be few in number but broad in scope (i.e., address the areas identified in the comprehensive needs assessment);
- be clearly stated (not ambiguous or confusing);
- be realistic and measurable;
- be stated positively and be proactive rather than reactive (what we will do more of and how we will address the current situation rather than react to the problems of the past; and
- be achievable within a reasonable time frame (create a sense of urgency).

**Formula for
Generating Effective Goals**

Basic Elements of an Effective Goal:[1]

Action verb (develop, design)

+ **Descriptive qualifier** (student focused, targeted)

+ **End product** (community partnerships)

+ **Target date** (by June 2000)

---

[1] Reference Guide to Continuous Improvement Planning for Ohio School Districts, 1999, p. 55.

In determining whether you have written a clear goal statement, ask these questions:

- Would individuals outside of the planning team understand the focus and the intent of the goals?
- Do our goals define a direction for change (i.e., something to improve or maintain)?
- Are our goals measures of what we want students to accomplish rather than statements of what staff will do?
- Are our goals **strategic** in nature and **limited** to provide focus and direction?

If you were able to answer yes to the questions above, then it is time to **Go for the Goal.**

1. Reflect on the needs statements indicated in the comprehensive needs assessment.
2. For each area of need, write a corresponding goal.
3. Use the formula for an effective goal to write a statement that meets the previously identified criteria.

Sample Goal

Needs statement	Goal statement
The school needs to minimize the time wasted between classes, the disruptions to daily classroom activity, and absenteeism.	By September of 2000, West High School will develop a plan for reducing passing times by 50 percent.

Where do we go from here? Understanding that this is the challenge we face, our team should consider the information that has been gathered from the "taking stock" activities and develop goals that will help schools improve academic achievement. Of course, this is not the only set of goals that a school will want to accomplish, but they are important. The single most effective strategy at this point in time to accomplish these goals is to teach what will be tested by these assessments – the Arizona Standards.

The activity of specifying goals can take many forms. One such form is to specify the goal, the activities that will be undertaken to achieve the goal, timelines for achievement, resources needed, and who will be responsible. It is often useful to do this activity with a series of worksheets.

Prioritizing and Translating

Chapter 5

Prioritizing Goals and Translating Into
Performance Results Indicators

Now that you have set rigorous accountability goals, it is time to make decisions about the importance of each and to translate them into meaningful action that will result in changes in student achievement. If the goal setting process suggested earlier is followed, it is a simple matter to move to the next step and specify the results desired.

Remember that goals should be specific and measurable. Performance results indicators provide a way to ensure that your goals are specific and measurable. Listed below are some basic elements of effective performance indicators:

> **Measurable, observable, and significant action**
> (percentage of students who will score at the "Meets the Standard" level on the AIMS test.) [2]
>
> + **Desired change** (increase, add, eliminate, complete)
>
> + **Target** (to 90 percent, by at least five percentage points)
>
> + **Time frame (**by 2002, by semester)

To help you design effective performance indicators, ask:

- What actions by a specific group of people will be observed, counted or measured?

- What is the direction of the desired change?

- What is the precise target of the change?

An example of an objective from the goal on the previous page would be:

> Each grade level will decrease their dropout rate to 25 percent or less by June 2001.

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[2] Reference Guide to Continuous Improvement Planning for Ohio School Districts, 1999, p. 59.

Form 3

Setting Goals for the Future

Goal Statement	Evidence to be Gathered

Arizona School Improvement Guide

Challenges and Needs

In order to reach your goals, you need to have a sense of the challenges and needs that exist in your school. Start with student achievement. In which content areas do your students do well? Where are they weaker? For example, are they doing well with main idea but not with decoding? Are they mastering liberal comprehension but weak in inferential comprehension?

What will you need to do to address the challenges?

After considering student achievement, examine other areas like parent involvement or technology integration. Once again, be specific in your analyses of strengths and weaknesses.

Needs and challenges can be categorized in any number of ways. There are things you can change in the school, and there are things that you can only influence. Here is a framework for looking at areas that are typically associated with challenges and needs.

Things you can change	Things you can influence
Achievement	Student Effort
Instruction	
Curriculum	Parental Involvement
Climate	
Student-Teacher Interactions	Staff Commitment
Rules and Regulations	
Instruction	Student Interactions with Peers
Rules and Regulations	
Communications with Home	School Readiness
Professional Development	
Facilities	
Technology	
Resources	
Decision Making	
Services for Families and Students	

Other items can be added to the list. You will want to identify the needs and challenges that are important in your individual context. Once that task is done, you can determine what to do about the needs and challenges you face, and then set strategies for meeting your goals.

Form 4

Challenges And Needs

Where We Are Now	Where We Want To Be

Now you can develop a picture of what needs to be done to achieve your goals. For example, a goal might be to increase the achievement of students whose first language is not English. If student achievement is eventually to be measured in English, you will not only have to create conditions for students to master content but also help them develop sufficient proficiency in English to do so. This is when you specify strategies for achieving your goals. For example, you may want to instruct younger children and recent arrivals about content in their home language for a couple of years. You may want to use a lot of visual aids and manipulatives to aid in understanding. You also want them to master English, so you need strategies for that as well, such as grouping them with English speakers as soon as possible.

The worksheet on the following page helps you organize your thinking around strategies. The process asks you to articulate what it is that you want to accomplish, what you will do, and what to expect as a result.

Form 5

Anticipated Outcomes Worksheet

What You Want to Accomplish (Goals)	What You Will Do (Activities or Strategies)

Exploring Effective Practices

Chapter 6

Exploring Effective Practices

Once the school improvement team completes its needs assessment and establishes its goals, it should begin the process of determining how it will reach improvement goals. A key tactic for improvement efforts of any kind is the exploration of effective practices. Regardless of whether the team is involved in schoolwide planning, planning for continuous improvement, or comprehensive school reform, the planning process requires an examination and selection of effective, scientifically research-based methods.

A school has at least two choices when it decides to explore scientifically research- based practices for improvement. One choice is to adopt a component approach to improvement, addressing one element (e.g. family involvement) at a time. Another is to adopt a schoolwide or whole school approach to improvement where the entire school becomes a focus of the change. Each of these has advantages and disadvantages.

Addressing one component at a time can result in immediate changes that become the basis for more extensive changes later. For example, improving communication with families may lead to more family involvement in their children's education. Often small changes can effect powerful results.

On the other hand, a component approach may not be sufficient to improve education for all of the students in schools with a high concentration of poverty. The Department of Education (1996), in its regulatory guidance for schoolwide programs, indicated that:
- All children's performance is negatively affected in schools with high concentrations of poverty.
- For the lowest achieving students in the most impoverished schools to meet high standards of performance, their entire instructional program must be substantially improved.
- When an entire school is the target of change, schools serving the most disadvantaged youth can achieve success.

A whole school change effort or a comprehensive school reform strategy addresses the findings above but many schools may not feel ready for such an intensive effort. In this instance, assessment of readiness for whole school reform is essential. To determine readiness for whole school reform, team members should research how well the model addresses its unique needs, characteristics, goals, and the amount of training and resources required for implementation.

Here is a step-by-step approach to exploring scientifically research-based practices:

1. Determine who will conduct the investigations.
2. Review the research on effective practices using compendia of research practices (see the Knowledge Loom website online at http://www.Knowlegeloom.org) or available comprehensive school reform websites.
3. Locate schools that use the exemplary practices.
4. Visit or call the schools and ask about evidence of program effectiveness and implementation requirements and challenges.

5. Bring the information collected back to the school's leadership team.
6. Discuss the relative merits of the practices reviewed.
7. Decide on the strategy that best meets the needs of the schools. (See Chapter 5 for information on the PINS analysis.

Regardless of whether you engage in whole school or component reform, there are some guiding questions to help in the determination of appropriate strategies. Consider these:

✓ Is there adequate research and documentation to show the efficacy of the strategy?
✓ Do the strategies build on recognized strengths, address identified needs, and build on what the school has learned based on its experiences with students?
✓ Do the strategies address the cultural, linguistic, and learning strengths of diverse groups of students?
✓ Do the strategies show promise for accelerating the academic progress of groups of students who are achieving less than their peers? (That is, will they close the achievement gap?)
✓ Will the strategies realistically result in diverse groups of students achieving the same challenging goals expected of all students?
✓ Do the selected strategies require intensive professional development? If so, for whom and how much, for how long, and at what cost?
✓ Are there opportunities for parents or other community members to extend the application of the strategies into the home or other appropriate community setting?

Adapted from the STAR Center Toolkit for Assessing and Revising the Integrated Campus Improvement and Title I Schoolwide Plan (1998).

The following examples describe how two schools approached the examination of scientifically research based practices.

Component Approach

Rio Grande Elementary school is a suburban school that has a poverty rate of 75 percent. The school improvement team decided that one of its goals should be to improve family involvement. The committee decided that Betty and Jane would conduct the investigation into scientifically research based practices in order to improve family involvement. Betty and Jane began their search by going to the National PTA's website. There they discovered that there were standards and examples of quality indicators of effective parent involvement programs. They also learned about Epstein's six types of partnerships with families. Upon further investigation, the team learned that Los Alamos Elementary School, a school located fifty miles from Rio Grande, was implementing the Epstein model. Betty and Jane requested mileage reimbursement from the school principal so that they could visit Los Alamos. They specifically asked questions about the strategies that were in use and the evidence of effectiveness of the strategies.

Betty and Jane brought this information to the next meeting of the school improvement team. The team discussed the pros and cons of implementing the Epstein model. After discussion, the team decided to implement the model and focus specifically on improving their practices for increasing parent support for learning since this type of partnership is most closely related to increasing academic achievement.

Schoolwide or Comprehensive School Reform Approach

Cesar Chavez Middle School is located in a rural area, and has a poverty rate of 75 percent. From an analysis of their data, the school improvement team determined that a whole school reform model that would help students improve math skills was the approach to take. John and Michael were the two-team members assigned to investigate comprehensive school reform models. From a review of the Department of Education's schoolwide planning book they learned about the Eisenhower Math and Science Centers. One of the centers suggested that they begin to explore catalogs of school reform models. Through an examination of a school reform catalog, John and Michael decided that there were a few models that might address their needs. They felt that the Connected Mathematics Project that served students grades 6-8, the Advancement Via Independent Determination (AVID) model, and the University of Chicago School Mathematics Project might be worth further exploration.

John and Michael brought information about the three models to the school improvement team. The team drafted some questions to ask the model developers. (See the sample questions on page 42). John and Michael then called the model developers to get more information. After collecting the information, the school improvement team discussed the pros and cons of implementing these school reform models. Next, they selected the one that best fit their needs.

Organizing Your Research Based Information

The chart on the following page will help you capture the results from an exploration of effective practices. Use it to detail information about several strategies.

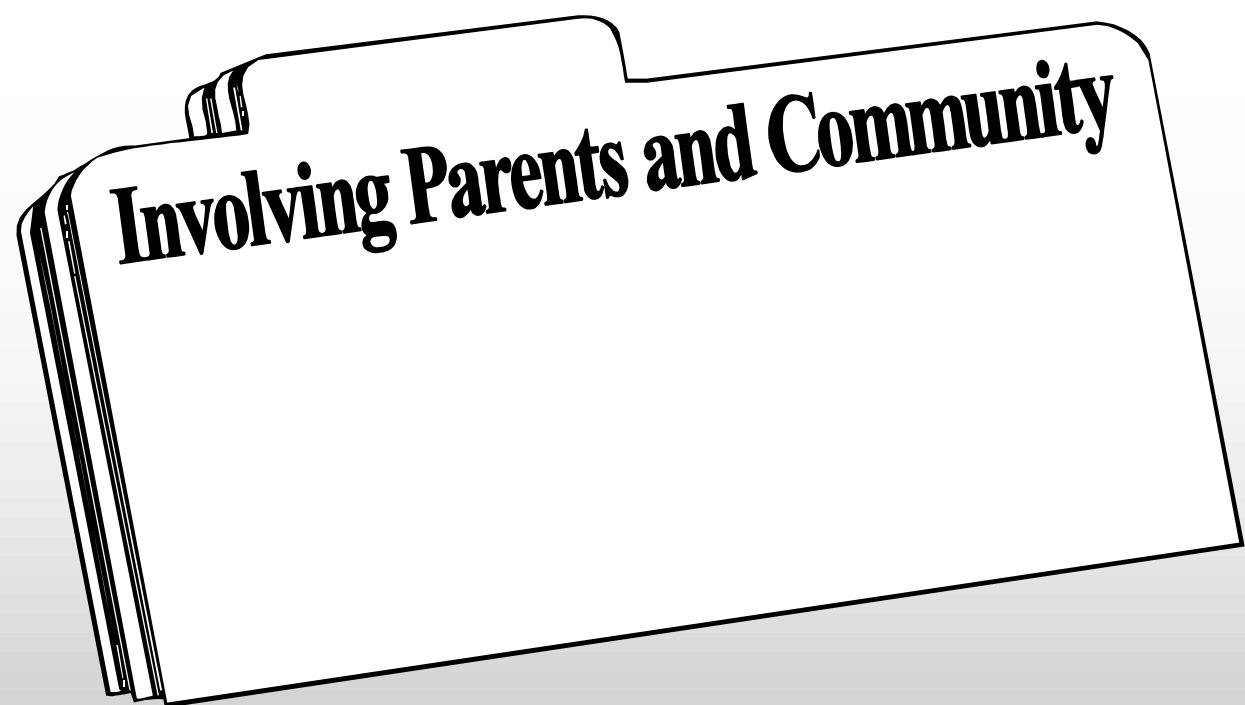# Form 6

Information Collected on Effective Practices

Directions: List each effective practice that your team is exploring. In the section on description, include information about the following:
- ✓ **Goals of the strategy**
- ✓ **Students served**
- ✓ **Grade levels addressed**
- ✓ **Curricular focus**
- ✓ **Instructional practices**
- ✓ **Family/Community involvement**
- ✓ **School organization and climate**

List the advantages and disadvantages for your setting. Use multiple copies as necessary

Strategy	Description	Pros (Advantages)	Cons (Disadvantages)

Adapted from Temple University's Laboratory for Student Success website…www.reformhandbookLSS.org

Involving Parents and Community

Chapter 7

Involving Parents and Community

"Better education is everybody's business."
Former Secretary of Education, Richard Riley

Creating systemic change in a school is labor- intensive, and requires the sustained efforts of many people: parents, teachers, administrators, community members, and staffs of outside organizations, (Giles, 1998). If schools are to get better, all stakeholders must be involved. The involvement of parents and community members is a vital part of making necessary reforms. This involvement goes beyond simply inviting parents to conferences or sending them information. The involvement needed for school reform is the involvement that seeks meaningful participation and a voice in what is to happen in the school.

A very compelling reason for the involvement of parents and community comes from Seymour Sarason (1995). He refers to it as a political principle; "…when you are going to be affected, directly or indirectly, by a decision, you stand in some relationship to the decision making process." In other words, those affected by a decision should have a role, a voice in the process of decision making. Since schoolwide reform efforts are likely to affect parents, students, and in some circumstances, community, these constituents should be involved in the development and the implementation of the school improvement plan.

Although there are significant challenges involved in reaching out to families and communities, there are significant benefits to schools when families and communities are involved. The National PTA (2000) reinforces these notions by stating that:

- Schools with a high degree of parent involvement have more support from families and better reputations in the community.
- School programs that involve parents usually outperform identical programs without parent and family involvement.
- Schools where children are failing often improve dramatically when parents are enabled to become effective partners in their children's education.

It is important that parent and community involvement extend beyond the minimal requirements of legislation and regulation. At a minimum, schools must develop parent involvement policies and school compacts. Schools must also build the capacity of parents to be meaningfully involved in their children's education. (For a summary of legislative parent involvement requirements, see pages 49-50.)

Even though schools may meet the requirements of legal mandates, their efforts may not be sufficient to recruit parents and community members for the difficult work of school reform. Many schools face significant challenges in simply getting parents to attend school events. Their efforts to involve parents may be affected by a past history of poor attendance at school events, cultural and language differences, and lack of time and resources to develop and sustain partnerships with parents.

In order to improve parent involvement, schools must first identify some of the reasons why parents do not get involved. The American Association of School Administrators (1998) reported several factors that discourage involvement and what schools can do instead to encourage parent participation. They are:

- *Lack of vested interest.* Parents don't see the value of participation. **Solution:** Let parents help choose and plan school activities and services.
- *Intimidation.* Parents who speak another language may feel vulnerable and ill-equipped to participate. **Solution:** Offer parents many levels of involvement in services and activities.
- *Being overwhelmed.* The stresses of daily life make parents feel that they can't do another thing. **Solution:** Encourage parent networking and provide other means of social support to reduce parents' stress and feeling of isolation and powerlessness.
- *No concrete support for involvement.* Many parents lack time, child care, and transportation. **Solution:** Provide child care, food, and transportation. Schedule activities well in advance and at times convenient for parents.
- *Perception that nothing will change.* **Solution:** Immediately follow up on parent concerns. Publicize change brought about by parent input.

Once schools have done the urgent work of identifying and overcoming barriers to parent involvement, they should turn their attention to the long- range strategy of establishing partnerships. The establishment of partnerships can foster and sustain involvement over time. Funkhouser and Gonzales (1997) offer these suggestions for developing partnerships with families and communities:

Avoid one-size fits all approaches to partnerships. Build on what works well locally. Begin the school-family partnership by identifying, with families, the strengths, interests, and needs of the families, students, and school staff; and design strategies that respond to identified strengths, interests, and needs.

Recognize that training and staff development require an essential investment. Provide professional development for school staff and family members. Both school staff and families need the knowledge and skills that enable them to work with one another and with the larger community to support children's learning.

Recognize that communication is the foundation of effective partnerships. Plan strategies that accommodate the varied language and cultural needs as well as lifestyles and work schedules of school staff and families. Even the best-planned school-family partnerships will fail if the participants cannot communicate effectively.

Build in flexibility as an important component of partnerships. Effective parent involvement can take many forms and may not necessarily require parents' presence at a workshop, meeting, or school.

Acknowledge that significant change takes time. It is important to remember that developing a successful school-family partnership requires continued effort over time. Frequently solving one problem brings new challenges.

The work of reaching out to families and communities is too important to be left to chance. Things get better by design. Here are some action steps to assist school improvement teams with the involvement of families and communities:

1. Review the current Title I legislation to determine the requirements that schools must meet. See legislative summary page 49.
2. Review current parental involvement policies, and the school compact, and revise as necessary. See the brief assessment for parent involvement policies page 51 and the evaluation of the school compact page 52.
3. Assess current practices in parental involvement. See the Starting Points checklist page 53.
4. Develop an action plan to implement parental involvement policies and to correct any deficiencies in the operation of the program. See the action plan format on page 60.

Parental Involvement

Shared Responsibility Between the LEA, the School Campus, and the Parents for High Student Performance

Program Requirement: Activities **must be** planned and implemented with **meaningful** consultation with parents of participating children.

Funding Requirement: (1) An amount equal to one percent (1%) of the LEA's Title I, Part A entitlement must be spend on Parental Involvement activities if the LEA's allocation is over $500,000.

(2) Parents of participating children are to be involved in the decisions regarding how funds reserved are allocated for parental involvement activities.

LEA Responsibilities	School/Campus Responsibilities
1. *Written LEA Parent Involvement Policy* ♦ Describes **how** the policy will be developed with, agreed upon, and distributed to parents of participating children. ♦ Describes **how** parents are involved in the development of the Title I, Part A planning process of school review and improvement. ♦ Describes **how** technical assistance will be provided to schools to build the schools' and parents' capacity for strong parental involvement. ♦ Describes **how** parental involvement activities will be integrated and coordinated with other program parental involvement activities. ♦ Describes **how**, with the involvement of parents, and annual evaluation will be conducted to determine if there has been an increase in parental participation and whether there are barriers to greater participation, particularly by parents who	1. *Written School Parent Involvement Policy* ♦ Describes **how** it will be developed with, agreed upon, and distributed to parents of participating children. ♦ Describes **how** the policy will be carried out. ♦ Describes **how** access will be provided to ensure equal access for all parents of all participating children, including parents with limited English proficiency or with disabilities. ♦ Describes **how** an annual meeting of parents will be convened to discuss schoolwide or targeted assistance programs and their rights to be involved. ♦ Describes **how** regular meetings will be held and how meetings will be flexible to ensure participation. ♦ Describes **how** parents will be involved in the school plan, Part A programs, and the parental involvement policy. ♦ Describes **how** parents will be provided information on Part A, school performance, students' individual assessments, school curriculum, and how parents will be given timely

LEA Responsibilities	**School/Campus Responsibilities**
are disabled, limited English proficient, limited literacy, economically disadvantaged, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background. ♦ Describes **how** the results of the evaluation will be used in designing strategies for school improvement and revising, if necessary, the parental involvement policies.	responses to their suggestions. Policy must be updated periodically to meet changing needs of the parents and the school.
2. *Technical Assistance to schools to implement parental involvement requirements at the campus level*	2. *School-Parent Compact* ♦ Developed jointly with the parents of participating students. ♦ Describes responsibilities of the school and parents to improve student performance and the means by which to do so. ♦ Describes how ongoing communication will occur, at a minimum, parent/teacher conferences. ♦ Parent signature is strongly encouraged.
3. *Building the capacity for parental involvement* ♦ Information to parents on the school, parent programs, student programs, and schoolwide authority in the primary language used in the home. ♦ Enable parents to play four key roles in their children's learning: a) teacher – help their child at home b) supporter – contribute their skills to the school c) advocate – help their child receive fair treatment d) decision maker – participate in joint problem solving with the school at every level	3. *Building the capacity for parental involvement* ♦ Materials provided to parents to work with students at home. ♦ Training teachers and parents. ♦ Parent activities, such as parent resource centers. ♦ Parent programs, such as an adult literary program. ♦ Coordination with other programs, activities, and the community. ♦ Provisions for transportation and child care, as appropriate. ♦ Information provided in the language parents understand.

Form 7

Parent Involvement Policy Checklist

How does your parent involvement policy measure up?

1. Is statement of purpose included in the policy?   Yes   No   Better do it!
2. Were parents involved in developing the policy?   Yes   No   Better do it!
3. Was an annual meeting held with the parents to explain the policy?   Yes   No   Better do it!
4. Is our school-parent compact mentioned in our parent involvement policy?   Yes   No   Better do it!
5. Did we mention assessing the needs of our community and matching programs to these needs in our policy?   Yes   No   Better do it!
6. Did we outline the process for staff-parent communication in our policy?   Yes   No   Better do it!
7. Do we have a districtwide Title I Advisory Committee with parent representatives – and is it mentioned in our parent involvement policy?   Yes   No   Better do it!

Form 8

Evaluating Your School-Parent Compact

- Our compact is attractive, not forbidding.   Yes   No   Needs Work.

- We have avoided using "legal" language.   Yes   No   Needs Work

- Our compact is readable and understandable.   Yes   No   Needs Work

- Our compact is substantive, but do-able. We have considered the constraint on parents, teachers, and families.   Yes   No   Needs Work

- Our compact is connected to actions that have a high probability of improving achievement.   Yes   No   Needs Work

- Our compact is written with equal responsibilities for all participants.   Yes   No   Needs work

Starting Points:

An Inventory of Present Practices of
School-Family-Community Partnerships

Karen Clark Salinas, Joyce L. Epstein, and Mavis G. Sanders
National Network of Partnership-2000 Schools, Johns Hopkins University

This inventory will help you identify your school's present practices for each of the six types of involvement that create a comprehensive program of school, family, and community partnerships. At this time, your school may conduct all, some, or none of the activities listed. Not every activity is appropriate for every school or grade level. You may write in other activities that you conduct for each type of involvement.

The Action Team for School, Family, and Community Partnerships should complete this inventory, with input from the teachers, parents, the school improvement team, and others, as appropriate. These groups have different knowledge about all of the present practices of partnership in your school.

After you complete the inventory, you will be ready to write a Three-Year Outline and One-Year Action Plan to show how you will increase, improve, or maintain activities for each of the six types of involvement in your school.

Directions: Check the activities that you conduct and circle all of the grade levels presently involved. Write in other activities for each type of involvement that your school conducts.

To assess how well each activity is implemented, add these symbols next to the check-box: * (for very well implemented with all families), + (a good start with many families), - (needs improvement).

TYPE 1 – PARENTING: BASIC RESPONSIBILITIES OF FAMILIES. Assist families with parenting skills and setting home conditions to support children as students, and assist schools to understand families.	At Which Grades?
❏ We sponsor parent education workshops and other courses or training for parents.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ We provide families with information on child or adolescent development.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ We provide families with information on developing home conditions that support learning.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ We lend families books or tapes on parenting or videotapes of parent workshops.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

❏ We ask families for information about children's goals, strengths, and talents.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ We sponsor home visiting programs or neighborhood meetings to help families understand schools and to help schools understand families.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ _____	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ _____	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ _____	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ _____	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

TYPE 2 – COMMUNICATING: BASIC RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCHOOLS. Conduct effective communications from school to home and from home to school about school programs and children's progress.	**At Which Grades?**
❏ We have formal conferences with every parent at least once a year.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ We provide language translators to assist families as needed.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ We provide clear information about report cards and how grades are earned.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ Parents pick up report cards.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ Our school newsletter includes:	
❏ a calendar of school events	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ student activity information	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ curriculum and program information	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ school volunteer information	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ school governance information	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Newsletter includes: . . . . (cont.)

❏ samples of student writing and artwork	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ a column to address parents' questions	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ recognition of students, families, and community members	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ other _____	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ We provide clear information about selecting courses, programs, and activities in this school.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ We send home folders of student work weekly or monthly for parent review and comments.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ Staff members send home positive messages about students on a regular basis.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ We notify families about student awards and recognition.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ We contact the families of students having academic or behavior problems.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ Teachers have easy access to telephones to communicate with parents during or after school.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ Parents have the telephone numbers of the school, principal, teachers, and counselors.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ We have a homework hotline for students and families to hear daily assignments and messages.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ We conduct an annual survey for families to share information and concerns about students' needs and reactions to school programs.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ _____	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ _____	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ _____	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ _____	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

TYPE 3 – VOLUNTEERING: INVOLVEMENT AT AND FOR THE SCHOOL. Organize volunteers and audiences to support the school and students.	At Which Grades?
❏ We conduct an annual survey to identify interests, talents, and availability of volunteers.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ We have a parent room or family center for volunteer work, meetings, and resources for families.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ We encourage families and the community to be involved at school by:	
❏ assisting in the classroom (e.g., tutoring, grading papers, etc.)	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ helping on trips or at parties	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ giving talks (e.g., careers, hobbies, etc.)	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ checking attendance	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ monitoring halls, or working in the library, cafeteria, or other areas	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ leading clubs or activities	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ other _____	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ We provide ways for families to be involved at home or in the community if they cannot volunteer at school.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ We have a program to recognize our volunteers.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ We schedule plays, concerts, games, and other events at different times of the day or evening so that all parents can attend some activities.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ _____	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ _____	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ _____	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ _____	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

TYPE 4 – LEARNING AT HOME: INVOLVEMENT IN ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES. Involve families with their children in homework and other curriculum-related activities and decisions.	At Which Grades?
❏ We provide information to families on required skills in all subjects.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ We provide information to families on how to monitor and discuss schoolwork at home.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ We provide information on how to assist students with skills that they need to improve.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ We have a regular schedule of interactive homework that requires students to demonstrate and discuss what they are learning with a family member.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ We ask parents to listen to their child read or to read aloud with their child.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ We provide calendars with daily or weekly activities for families to do at home and in the community.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ We help families help students set academic goals, select courses and programs, and plan for college or work.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ _____	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ _____	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ _____	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ _____	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

TYPE 5 – DECISION MAKING: PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP. Include families as participants in school decisions, and develop parent leaders and representatives.	At Which Grades?
❏ We have an active PTA, PTO, or other parent organization.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ Parents are represented on the school's advisory council, improvement team, or other committees.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

	At Which Grades?
❏ We have an Action Team for School, Family, and Community Partnerships to develop a program with practices for all six types of involvement.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ Parents are represented on district-level advisory councils and committees.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ We provide information on school or local elections for school representatives.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ We develop formal networks to link all families with their parent representatives.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ We involve parents in selecting school staff.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ We involve parents in revising school/district curricula.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ _____	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ _____	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ _____	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ _____	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

TYPE 6 – COLLABORATING WITH THE COMMUNITY. Coordinate resources and services from the community for families, students, and the school, and provide services to the community.	At Which Grades?
❏ We provide a community resource directory for parents and students with information on community agencies, programs, and services.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ We provide information on community activities that link to learning skills and talents, including summer programs for students.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ We work with local businesses, industries, and community organizations on programs to enhance student skills.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ We offer after-school programs for students, with support from community businesses, agencies, or volunteers.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

❏ We sponsor intergenerational programs with local senior citizen groups.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ We provide "one-stop" shopping for family services through partnerships of school, counseling, health, recreation, job training, and other agencies.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ We organize service to the community by students, families, and schools.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ We include alumni in school programs for students.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ Our school building is open for use by the community after school hours.	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ _____	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ _____	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ _____	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
❏ _____	K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Form 9

Action Plan for Developing Family/School/Community Partnerships

Area of parental involvement focus_____

Activity_____

Goal to be accomplished_____

What will be done?	
What is the purpose of the activity?	
Who will accomplish the activity?	
When will they be done?	
What resources or materials are needed?	

| **What training needs to be provided?** |
| **How will we evaluate our success?** |
| |
| **How will we communicate our plan to others?** |
| |

Adapted from National PTA, *Building Successful Partnerships,* pp. 217-218.

Developing and Allocating

Chapter 8

Developing Strategies and Allocating Resources

Now that the team has finished exploring effective practices, it is ready to develop strategies. Strategies are specific actions that planners take to achieve the goals or objectives. As such, strategies offer a path for getting to your destination.

There are three "R's" necessary for developing strategies: **R**elevance, **R**eadiness, and **R**esources.

Relevance: Stakeholders see a need for the strategy, understand the change, and recognize its utility.

Readiness: The people involved in the strategy find the strategy reasonable. They have the time, knowledge, skill and culture to implement it.

Resources: The school has the resources to support the strategy.

Source: Improvement Planning for Ohio School Districts, 1999, p. 59.

In addition, consider these questions:
- Are we going to create a new course of action?
- Should we increase support for a course of action that shows promise?
- Should we re-design a course of action that is not achieving desired results?
- Can we eliminate or reduce support for a course of action that has limited value?

The next step in development of your plan is to frame possible strategies for implementing the goals. Examine a number of strategies that might lead you to the goals, and think about what will likely move the school forward from its current levels of functioning. You want strategies that reflect the highest likelihood of attaining the goals. Johnson, (1997) suggests the following ways to explore potential strategies:

- Learn about new possibilities by collecting information on high poverty-high performing school from visits to these schools and their web pages. Join list serves to discuss your concerns and identify others who are exemplary or who face challenges similar to yours. Involve staff in collecting this information. It is important to focus the exploration on

identification of factors that influence a program's success. Professional development, parent involvement, and instructional design are examples that you may want to investigate.

- Look for ways to build on your existing strengths. Reflect on the information in your comprehensive needs assessment. How can you can expand on your strengths? How can you transfer strengths from one area to another one? Can an analysis of what makes some students succeed help you in determining something that might work with another group of students? Which professional experiences of staff that might be useful in new contexts?

- Look at ways to eliminate unsuccessful practices. This may be difficult because people are often invested in particular approaches. However, you can use your data to determine whether these approaches produce the desired results. If not, eliminate them. A useful question to ask might be, "What alternative strategies would better lead to the attainment of our desired goals?"

- Think about reducing duplication. You may want to combine or coordinate services from programs that have similar functions.

Once your research on the strategies is complete, it may be useful to prepare a list of strategies that show a probability of assisting you in reaching your goals.
A chart like the one below might be useful. List the options along with the positive (plus), negative (minus), or interesting features. This will help you compile the information from a variety of sources.

Example

Strategy	Plus	Minus	Interesting
After school program	Research shows that extended time programs linked to academic skills increases student achievement. Title I dollars can be used for funding.	This program needs a high degree of collaboration. At present time no staff person has the time to coordinate the program activities.	The U. S. Department of Education has a document on its website. It gives a lot information about program models and benefits of after school programs.

Form 10

PMI Strategy

<u>Directions:</u> List each strategy in the first column. Summarize the results of the research listing the positive features and any other interesting or intriguing ideas. Finally, list what might be any challenging aspects of implementing the idea.

Strategy	Plus	Minus	Interesting

Prioritize and Select Your Strategies

In making decisions, there are several factors to consider. The first is limitation of time, money, and energy of personnel. Typically, a school has a limited amount of each of these that it can commit to options for change. With attention to all of the resources available, think about the option that produces the greatest change. Which action if taken, will produce the greatest amount of change within the resources available? Embedded within the answer to this question is the concept of leveraging. Identify the point in the system at which a strategic action will yield the greatest results or have the greatest benefits. In colloquial terms, you want to get the most for your money.

Another approach to leveraging is to use the 80/20 principle that states that 80 percent of results flow from 20 percent of efforts. By identifying and focusing on 20 percent of efforts that result in the greatest degree of success, it is possible to leverage efforts and increase effectiveness.

One way to do this is to consider whether a strategy addresses more than one need and whether its implementation will benefit more than one group. For example, the after-school program discussed previously has the potential to benefit students (higher achievement); parents (assurance that their children are being attended to); and communities (an opportunity to work with the schools in partnership). Implementing this option might offer more leverage than others in achieving the school's goals.

In addition, choose strategies that engender the support of staff and community. If a majority of the staff do not support an option, you may want to make another choice or find ways to transform resistance into support.

With a limitation of resources, it may not be possible to begin implementation of all strategies at the same time. Examine the possibility of prioritizing strategies into those that are short term and those that are long term. You might have to delay implementation of some strategies until more resources are available. Prioritizing will help you distinguish which strategies to tackle first and which to delay.

Finally, avoid TTWWADI (That's the way we've always done it) as a reason for selecting a strategy. TTWWADI often drains resources that could be used for new innovations. It is best not to let the force of history drive current choices when the data and history show that particular approaches do not produce results.

There are many ways to prioritize strategies. Involve key stakeholders in both the development and the prioritization of the strategies. Here is a simple process that you might find useful as you select your most important strategies:

Dot Voting

Directions:

List all of the identified strategies on flip chart pages.
Give each member of the planning group and other invited stakeholders 3-5 colored dots.
Ask people to carefully review each strategy.
Ask people to individually place their dots on the strategies that represent their highest priorities. Let them know that they may place all of their dots on one strategy or spread them out over several.
When the group has finished, review the strategies that have the most dots on them.
Select these to include in the action plan. Below is a sample chart that will help your team see the prioritization that results from dot voting.

TOPIC: _____

Strategies Likely to Have the Greatest Effect	Rank Order

Prior to taking the next step in developing your plan, it may be useful to pause in order to reflect on your strategies. You want to determine whether your strategies are sufficient to move your school from current levels of performance to the attainment of high goals for increasing student achievement. In addition, you may also want to assess likely pitfalls in the implementation of the strategies. Listed below are some questions that may assist you in evaluating the efficacy of your strategies.

✓ Do the strategies help you attain your goals?
✓ Will the strategies result in meaningful change?
✓ Are there any risks involved in implementing any of the strategies? If so, are we prepared to go ahead any way? Or, do we want to choose a new strategy?
✓ Do we have sufficient resources to commit to the implementation of the strategies?
✓ Do our stakeholders (parents and community members) support the implementation of the strategies?
✓ Must all of the strategies be started at once or can some be delayed?

Developing and Writing the Plan
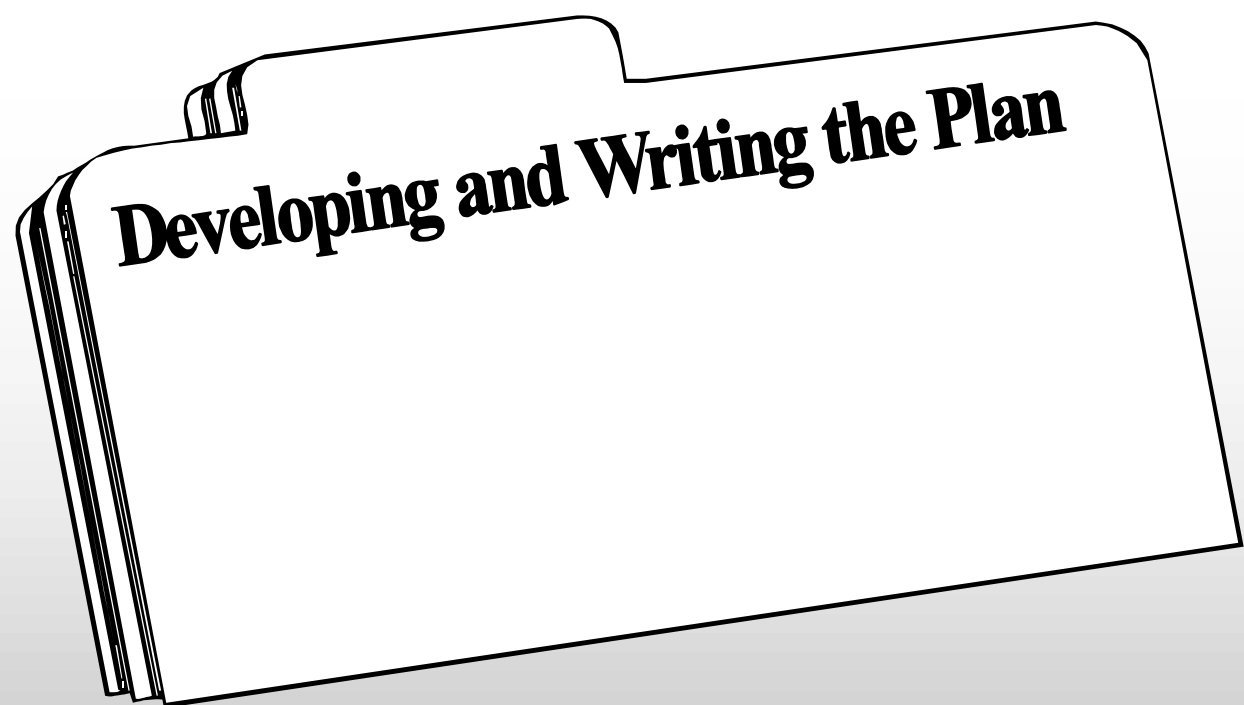
Chapter 9

Developing and Writing the Improvement Plan

Action Planning

After your team has collected and analyzed the data, reviewed literature on effective practices, examined resource allocation, and developed the goals and performance indicators, you should begin to focus on the development of an action plan for implementation. The action plan is a roadmap that will help you reach the goals or objectives that were previously defined.

There are several steps involved in the formation of an action plan.

Step 1: Define the major tasks associated with the implementation of your strategies.

Suppose that your planning team has decided to implement a family resource center in your school site. The major tasks would be:

- Establish a steering committee to guide the development and implementation of the family resource center.
- Identify a location for the center.
- Contact families to determine needs that could be met through a family resource center (e.g. adult basic education, English as a second language acquisition classes, activities to help children with homework, etc.)
- Solicit donations from the community for items that the center needs (e.g. children's books, toys, furniture, coffeepot, shelves, etc.)
- Obtain additional funding for needs not met by donations.
- Recruit staff or volunteers to manage the center.
- Provide training for staff or volunteers who will manage the center. Be sure that they are well versed in safety and other legal requirements and procedures.
- Provide supervision of staff.
- Evaluate the center activities.

Step 2: Articulate strategies for collecting evidence of impact.

Focusing on evaluation criteria early in the development of the plan brings attention to the fact that progress and actions will be measured. This will help to ensure that the tasks are completed and that people take responsibility.

Step 3: Designate the individuals responsible for completing each task. Decide who will be responsible and accountable for each task. The chart on the next page provides an example.

Action Step	Responsible Person
Establish a steering committee.	Building principal
Identify a space for the center.	Steering committee
Contact families to determine needs.	Parent involvement liaison
Solicit donations from the community.	Steering committee
Obtain additional funding.	Principal or parent liaison
Recruit staff or volunteers.	Building principal
Provide training for staff or volunteers.	Parent involvement specialist
Evaluate center activities	Steering committee

Step 4: Examine costs and allocate resources.

It is important to determine all of the costs associated with the implementation of a strategy. Johnson (1997), lists some useful questions that teams might consider when examining costs for implementation of a strategy:

- What are the extra personnel costs associated with this strategy?
- Will there be a need for extra-duty pay or stipends? If so, how much is needed?
- What kinds of costs will be associated with professional development that might be needed in order to make this strategy work?
- Will there be a need for substitutes?
- Will there be a need to procure and consultants/
- What are the costs of materials that will be needed to help parents understand this strategy and be supportive?
- What kinds of equipment will be needed to make this work?
- Are there likely to be installation charges for any of the equipment?
- Will there be a need to pay travel costs to visit another site that is implementing this strategy?

Once your team has examined the costs, determine whether there are sufficient resources available to implement the plan. If not, you must find alternative fund sources. Listed below are some options that will assist you in looking for funds.
- Do we need a new source of funding? (Should we write grants or look for donations from businesses?)
- Should we redirect funding from programs that are ineffective? (Do we decrease funding for one thing and fund something else?) [For assistance, see Chapter 10 on Resource Reallocation.]
- Can we combine funds from several sources? (Are there allowable costs associated with federal funds that can be used to fund our strategy?) [For assistance see Form 9.]

Here is a sample matrix with tasks, persons responsible, and resources listed.

Action Step	Responsible Person	Resources Needed
Establish a steering committee.	Building principal	Time for committee to meet
Identify a space for the center.	Steering committee	Remodeling of store room
Contact families to determine needs.	Parent involvement liaison	Printing for family surveys, time for liaison to do the survey
Solicit donations from the community.	Steering committee	Time for committee to contact community organizations
Obtain additional funding.	Principal or parent liaison	Stipend for parent liaison to write a grant
Recruit staff or volunteers.	Building principal	Time, advertising expenses
Provide training for staff or volunteers.	Parent involvement specialist	Extra time for liaison to do training in the evenings
Evaluate center activities	Steering committee	Extra time for committee to compile survey results

Once you have the resources listed, develop a budget plan that includes funding sources as well as the dollar amount for each of the action steps. See Form 14 for a sample budget plan that combines funds from several sources.

Step 5: Develop a timeline for each of the action steps.

The timelines in your plan represent the dates by which you will complete each action. They can serve as an overall guide for implementation of the plan. Often, timelines may need to shift in order to get a more realistic estimate of what it will take to complete both the major and the subtasks. If timelines need to shift, it is important that the planning team be aware of necessary changes so that it avoids any communication problems.

Form 11

Action Plan

Need: _____

Goal: _____

Strategy: _____

Evaluation: _____

Major Tasks	Who Is Responsible	Resources Needed	Timeline

Form 12

Investigating Sources for Combining Funds

The form below will help you explore additional options for funding your strategies. First, list the fund sources that you have in your school. Next, list the <u>required</u> uses and the <u>allowable</u> uses of those funds. The required uses are those elements mandated by law (e.g., services to migrant students). The allowable uses are those areas in which there is flexibility in expenditure of those funds (e.g., purchase of materials for staff development activities.)

Source:	**Source:**	**Source:**	**Source:**
<u>Required:</u> <u>Allowable:</u>	<u>Required:</u> <u>Allowable:</u>	<u>Required:</u> <u>Allowable:</u>	<u>Required:</u> <u>Allowable:</u>

Adapted from WestEd (1996)

Form 13

Coordinated Funding
Matching Funds to Strategies

Strategy to be funded	Possible funding source

Form 14

Budget Plan

Need:_____

Goal:_____

Strategy: _____

Evaluation: _____

Major Tasks	Resources Needed	Costs	Sources of Funding

Arizona School Improvement Guide

Writing the Plan

Writing the draft plan is one of the easiest parts of the planning process. The hard work of defining goals, performance indicators, mapping out the strategic actions and evaluation procedures is behind you.

The team should discuss how the work accomplished to date can be pulled together into one coherent plan. Does your team want to designate one person to compile the information into the draft, or, does your team want to write the plan by committee with small groups working together to sketch the major components of the plan? Regardless of which approach you choose, view the written plan as a preliminary draft. You will want to get feedback from various stakeholder groups (e.g., school staff, family and community members, etc.) before you finalize the plan.

Obtaining Feedback on the Draft

Since the draft represents the work of the planning team, it is important to get feedback from individuals who were outside of the initial planning process. The team should first seek feedback from the rest of the school's staff. In preparing for a presentation to the school staff, the team could use a group process strategy that allows discussion while at the same time providing opportunities for constructive feedback.

One such strategy is PINS. (**P**ositive, **I**nteresting, **N**egative, and **S**uggestion). It is a variation of the PMI strategy on page 65. The PINS approach maximizes input by allowing small groups or individuals to respond to the various components with statements that are positive, interesting, and negative. However, the groups must also offer a suggestion for improvement. The planning team can use the suggestions to make revisions on the draft.

It is also important to present a draft of the plan to family and community members. Use clear and easy to understand charts, data displays, and other visual tools to make the presentation easy to follow. The taking stock approach mentioned in Chapter 2 can be a useful way to approach the delivery of information to families and community members.

Each team member describes and summarizes the key components of:

- Where we were;
- Where we are now;
- Where we are going; and
- How we intend to get there. (This last component is not part of taking stock but it provides a way to introduce the strategies that the school recommends for implementing its goals.)

Finalizing the Plan

Use the feedback from all of the stakeholder groups to finalize the plan. Share the final document with all of the interested groups. Once this is done, you are ready to move ahead with implementation.

Form 15

PINS Analysis

Goal:_____

Positive:

_____

Interesting:

_____

Negative:

_____

Suggestion:

_____

Form 15a

PINS Analysis for Strategies

Strategy:

_____

Positive:

_____

Interesting:

_____

Negative:

_____

Suggestion:

_____

Implementing the Plan
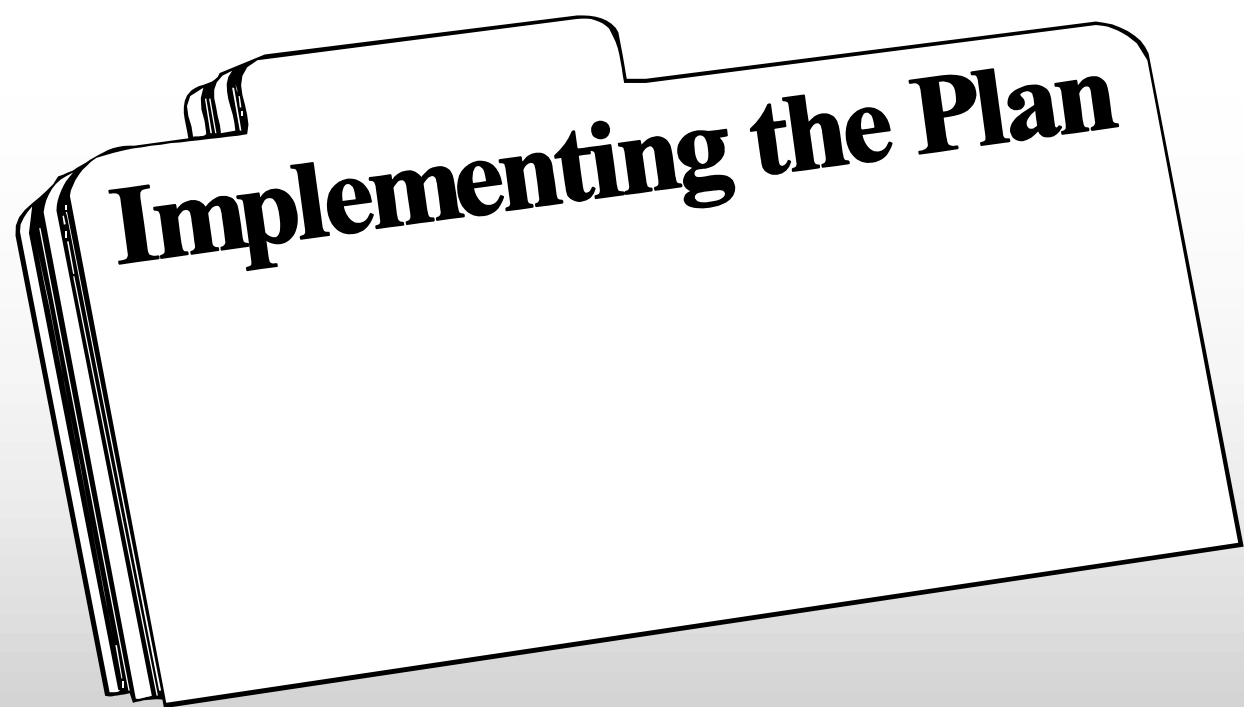
Chapter 10

Implementing the Improvement Plan

Implementation is hard work! It requires that teams celebrate success, maintain momentum, and keep people energized. Continuous improvement procedures should also take into account what happens to people as they begin to implement major change. The literature on organizational change is quite extensive. Below are some of the approaches that frequently appear in the literature.

Source	Approach	Description
Hord, Rutherford, Huling, Austin, and Hall (1987)	Concerns-based adoption model	The model describes stages of concern about innovations as well as level of use regarding implementation.
Showers and Joyce (1998)	The process of adopting innovations	How people approach innovations and the percentage of people on a continuum of early adopters, to resisters.
Hargreaves and Fullan (1996)	*What's Worth Fighting for in Your School*	Provides ideas and methods for teachers and principals to act as moral change agents who fight to establish new, more powerful working and learning conditions for their profession.
U. S. Department of Education	Guide for state and local leaders	Strategies for turning around low performing schools.
Senge (2000)	*Schools that Learn*	Components of a learning organization applied to schools
Rogers (1995)	*Diffusion of Innovations*	Describes the essential elements for diffusion of innovations as well as the history and the research surrounding it.

Examining trends, anticipating new paradigms and successfully managing change in turbulent times are no simple tasks, but they are the challenges that school leaders face in the new millennium. We all must become students of the change process. The future of our country and our children requires no less.

Recycling

Continuous improvement by definition is a never-ending process. According to the U. S. Department of Education (1998), continuous improvement means asking and answering questions about goals, assessment, progress and achievement. In the Schoolwide Idea book, the authors suggest that teams ask questions such as:

- What are our standards and overall goals?
- How well are we performing on our standards?
- Are we progressing toward our goals?
- Why are we at our current level of achievement?
- How can we do better?

Since the goal of any improvement process is better results, teams that use questions to reflect on their efforts and change their practices have a better chance of having their improvement efforts succeed. As you monitor implementation and collect information on how your plans are working, you will find that you uncover additional challenges and needs which lead you to new goals, new performance indicators and new strategies for action planning and implementation.

An important part of sustaining improvement process is celebration. Celebration provides an opportunity for reflection and re-energizing. The work of continuous improvement is difficult but rewarding. Teams that find a way to celebrate and acknowledge success are more likely to sustain their improvement efforts.

Examining Resource Reallocation

Chapter 11

Examining Resource Reallocation

Once schools have chosen an approach to school improvement, some consideration should be given to the ability to sustain reform efforts. This is true whether the school decides on a component approach or a comprehensive school reform model. It is unlikely that schools will receive a significant influx of new resources to provide for the ongoing costs of implementation (e.g., professional development intensive enough to result in changes in classroom practice). In this instance, resource reallocation may be a strategy that schools may want to consider.

Resource reallocation is the process by which schools examine existing resources (personnel, services, time, equipment, supplies, and money, etc.) in order to redirect them in more effective ways to increase student achievement. The underlying premise of resource reallocation is the notion that schools should have more flexibility in the way that they organize resources to improve student achievement (NCREL, 1999).

Resource reallocation offers several benefits. First, through the reallocation of resources schools are able to examine current services for unnecessary duplication of efforts and funding thus bringing about greater coordination of resources.

Second, research results from high performing schools show that successful schools align their resources to support increased student achievement. According to Miles and Darling-Hammond (1997), high performing schools do the following:

> ✓ reduce specialized programs.
> ✓ provide longer blocks of instructional time.
> ✓ organize time so teachers can work together.
> ✓ develop student groupings that are flexible and vary during the school day.
> ✓ put more resources into prevention rather than remediation.
> ✓ provide significant time and funds for professional development.
> ✓ integrate technology into the curriculum.

A third reason to explore resource reallocation is to improve the productivity of the educational system. As Odden (1998) states:

"The goal of current education reform in the United States is to hold each student to high standards. Seeing that even by optimistic analysis, only about 25 percent of students achieve at reasonable levels today (National Center for Educational Statistics, 1996), teaching students to high standards means increasing that percentage to at least 50 percent and ideally to 75 percent. The education reform goal is to double or triple results. ....Considering that education revenues are unlikely to come close to doubling or tripling during the same time period, the only way the education reform goal can be accomplished is by improving the productivity of the education system."

In order to begin the process of reallocating resources, schools should ask themselves the following questions.

- Are our spending patterns in alignment with our values?
- Are we getting the most for our money?
- On what are we basing our funding choices?
- Does resource reallocation have something to offer us?

If the answers to the first two questions are no, it may be useful to further examine the utility of resource reallocation. Here is a suggested process to follow in reallocating resources:

1. Determine all of the resources available to the school. These resources include funds for staff, materials, time, and services.
2. Gather evaluation information about the efficient and effective use of these resources. Look at available data that includes program evaluations, surveys, focus group results, etc.
3. Examine each resource and decide based on evaluation data whether the resource should be continued, continued with modification, or discontinued.
4. For resources to be continued with modification or discontinued, aggregate these to reallocate to other school improvement needs. The chart on the following page provides an example of how this process may be followed.
5. Once your team has decided which resources are to be reallocated, make plans to use these available dollars to fund strategies in your school improvement plan. See page 86 for a sample chart that can be adapted for your school's use.

EXAMPLE: Consider each item that reflects how this schoolwide program has currently allocated its resources. Make a determination whether each item should be continued, continued with modification, or discontinued entirely. Fill in the blanks that show funds that would be available for reallocation.

Current programs using combined funds $61,275

Check One: C=Continue; C/M=Continue with Modifications; D=Discontinue

Funds	Schoolwide activities	Evaluation	C	C/M	D	Funds to reallocate
$20,000	1 assistant for computer lab	Student focus group data indicated that the lab instructor read the newspaper once they began working on the computers.				
$6,250	Inclusion training for all regular classroom teachers	100% attendance. Twenty-five percent of the teachers are implementing modifications "most of the time."				
$6000	Professional Development for math and science integration.	The implementation of integrated math and science lessons is stalled. Teachers say they don't have enough time to meet for development of integrated lessons.				
$8,000	Interactive science kits	Use of interactive science kits began in the second semester. No formal evaluation of the effectiveness of the materials is available.				
$4,000	Professional development on a violence prevention program	On the average, teachers refer 25 students to the office each day for disrespectful behavior and fighting. The counselors and the assistant principals spend much of their time on discipline issues.				
$3,000	Social skills curricula	One of the school psychologists uses the social skills curricula with the most disruptive students. See above data for discipline information.				
$14,025	Materials for computer lab	Student focus group data show that the students perceive the materials to be similar to the worksheets in class.				

Reallocation Work Sheet

Directions: Once your school determines the amount of funds that it wants to reallocate to other improvement strategies, fill in the amount of funds and write a statement that shows how those funds could be used.

Program	Funds to Be Reallocated	Proposed Use of Funds
Schoolwide		
State Bilingual Education		
State Compensatory Education		
State Special Education		

Resource reallocation is a powerful strategy for obtaining additional resources to support and to sustain school improvement efforts. There are, however, cautions. It is important that reallocation efforts be both thoughtful and legal. Listed below are some cautions about reallocation:

✓ Resource reallocation may require eliminating jobs; so try to place employees into new roles where their skills can be used (e.g., instructional facilitator, staff development teacher leader, etc.).
✓ Be aware of rules and regulations that might now allow categorical resources (i.e., Title I, special education, etc.) to be reallocated.
✓ Be aware of the Individual's with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) so that you do not violate any federal laws related to the education of students with disabilities.
✓ Be sure to review any collective bargaining agreements for procedures that have to be followed when an individual's position has to be eliminated.
✓ Review any state licensure requirements that might restrict the redirection of roles and responsibilities for counselors, librarians, nurses, psychologists, etc.

Some people have found it useful to use simulations to explore the concepts of coordinating funds and resource reallocation. See www.starcenter.org for two such simulations. "Show Me the Money" helps school improvement teams practice the coordination of funding sources. It is available for downloading now. "Show Me the Data" models a process of resource reallocation. It will be available for downloading in late February.

Appendix

Appendix A
Completing a CSRD Application

The Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Program (CSRD) was funded in 1998 by the U. S. Department of Education to provide resources for schools to impact student achievement. Many of the CSRD schools in the state of Arizona are in their third year of implementation as of Winter, 2001, and there will be additional funding available through this program for new schools to participate.

The program is focused on Title I schools and advocates the use of reliable research and effective practices, with an emphasis on parental involvement and academics. Schools are given the opportunity to select from a variety of externally developed models, or may develop their own. The program's intent is to encourage comprehensive approaches to reform, so that all students can meet challenging state content and performance standards.

The Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration (CSRD) program is being used to support local school reforms that are aligned with the state initiatives and stimulate the coordination of local reforms with the Arizona Plan for Education. CSRD reinforces the need for schools to make decisions that are data-driven and will facilitate their engaging in an ongoing, self-monitoring process that will result in institutionalizing a research-based process at the school level. CSRD provides financial incentives to schools that need to substantially improve student achievement. By implementing comprehensive school reform programs that are based on reliable research and effective practices, these programs are being used to stimulate schoolwide change covering virtually all aspects of school operations, rather than a piecemeal, fragmented approach.

Arizona requires applicants to provide detailed goals, strategies, activities and action plans that are aligned with statewide reform initiatives and the implementation of the Arizona Academic Standards and AIMS. Applications will be judged on two dimensions: need and overall quality. To receive the funding, schools in the eligibility pool[1] will be required to propose the implementation of a high-quality, well-defined, research based comprehensive school reform program that integrates, in a coherent manner, the nine required components.

Before applying for CSRD funds, there are some key considerations. One is that the applications, which can involve externally developed or locally developed models, cannot be funded for planning purposes. All planning for implementation of CSRD models must be done beforehand. Again, the proposed activities need to address nine components, as set forth in the federal legislation for CSRD. These nine components will be a part of the application review process, and are listed here.

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[1] Eligibility will be determined by Improvement status. Additional details, including the application, will be available from ADE.

The Nine Components of
A Comprehensive School Reform Model

1. Effective, scientifically research-based methods and strategies
2. Comprehensive design with aligned components
3. Ongoing professional development
4. Measurable goals and benchmarks
5. Support within the school
6. Parental and community support and involvement
7. External support and assistance from qualified providers
8. Evaluation strategies
9. Coordination of resources

Arizona's experience with CSRD indicates that these nine components can be broken down into two categories: logistics and strategies. Logistics include measurable goals and benchmarks, enactment of support within the school, external support and evaluation strategies. Strategies, on the other hand, include effective scientifically research-based methods and strategies, comprehensive design with aligned components, ongoing professional development, parent and community involvement and coordination of resources. Logistics need to be taken care of first, and this will be adequately done if the planning process has been effectively carried out in a reasonable fashion. Then, it is possible to focus on implementation strategies with the logistics already in place.

Research conducted outside of Arizona suggests the same issues are being faced by sites implementing school reform models (Datnow, 2000). She recommends expanding the time in which schools make decisions about reforms, increasing the amount of information schools have about reforms prior to their adoption, make genuine efforts to increase teacher involvement in the adoption of reforms. In other words, it is important to gather information, to plan, and to get teachers directly involved in decisions about model adoption.

Most of the work for producing a quality level CSRD application has been covered through the use of the *Arizona School Improvement* guide. To facilitate the completion of an application, the following roadmap suggests where to find information related to the nine CSRD components just described.

CSRD and the School Improvement Process[2]

Comprehensive School Reform is systemic in nature and involves a whole school building in change efforts. It can be an internally developed approach, but the majority of schools in the currently funded CSRD program work with externally developed models and service providers.

Selecting a model developer is a complex decision and should not be undertaken lightly. It is important for a school to do its homework beforehand to ensure that the model selected is appropriate for the local context. The New American Schools facilitated the identification of guidelines for ensuring the quality of national design-based assistance providers. The school will want assurances that these guidelines are addressed if an external model developer is involved:

CSRD Guidelines: New American Schools Blue Ribbon Panel

♦ Performance of Design
  1. Demonstrates success in helping schools raise the achievement of all students to meet high standards
  2. Demonstrates success in helping schools achieve their organizational goals
  3. Has a research-proven, comprehensive design that encompasses an entire school and helps all students reach high standards
♦ Quality of Assistance
  1. Demonstrates how the provider's services and deliverables enable the design to be implemented successfully
  2. Provides quality professional development, technical assistance services, and materials to help schools ensure that all students reach high standards
  3. Demonstrates an on-going process for evaluating implementation, staff and parent satisfaction, and student achievement
  4. Links schools and engages parents and communities in a shared vision to help all students reach high standards
♦ Capacity of Design-Based Assistance Organization
  1. Demonstrates financial viability that ensures the provider's ability to provide continuing services to schools
  2. Demonstrates a capacity to deliver high-quality services to all schools that are implementing its design

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Aligned with the guidelines is a set of suggested elements that should be a part of a school improvement process:

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[2] Adapted from Tool kit for engaging a design assistance provider: Guidelines for ensuring the quality of national design-based assistance providers (2000). Arlington, VA: New American Schools. [Online]. Available: http://www.newamericanschools.org

1. Conduct a needs assessment
2. Set benchmarks and goals
3. Research designs and design-based assistance providers
4. Select a school design
5. Implement with a continuous improvement focus
6. Demonstrate public accountability for results

The guide, available on the Internet, details how to incorporate the guidelines in the model selection process.

If the steps in this guide are followed, the school will have done its homework for applying for CSRD funding. To focus application efforts, it is also helpful to answer the following eight questions about your school.

CSRD Proposal **Model Implementation Questions**
1.   How well do all faculty, administrators, staff and parents understand the goals and benchmarks of the model to be implemented in your school? 2.   How does this model involve the whole school in reform? 3.   How will this model measure whether its professional development plan results in improved teaching and learning? 4.   How will you monitor student performance in your school? 5.   How will you know if your school will demonstrate continued support for the reform effort? 6.   How will the community and parents be involved in the implementation of your reform model program? 7.   What commitments will you make to get and continue the support from the external technical assistance entity? 8.   How will you leverage existing resources such as funding, staff and in-kind contributions?

If you can satisfactorily answer these questions, you are well on your way to successful implementation of CSRD in your school. Here are some additional things to consider as you go about the task of writing proposals for CSRD funding:

♦ Maintain a high level of intensity and focus on goals and benchmarks;
♦ Strive to make sure that your selected approach is truly comprehensive;
♦ Plan to monitor professional development efforts;
♦ Plan to monitor student performance with multiple indicators and disaggregate data;
♦ If building staff do not support reform efforts, changes need to be made;
♦ Make sure that the parents and community are involved in planning reform efforts;
♦ Make sure that external model developers have the capacity to deliver products, services, technical assistance, professional development;
♦ Have strong, focused evaluation plans;
♦ Consider CSRD implementation as a means to accomplish the vision for the school, not as the ends; and
♦ Use CSRD funds as a resource that can be allocated to achieving the school's mission in combination with other resources.

A great deal of information has just been covered relating to the implementation of a Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration in your school. It is complex in nature and there are many details to consider when engaging in the CSRD proposal development process. Following is a suggested list of steps to take if you are interested in applying for a CSRD grant.

STEPS to Effective CSRD Program Implementation
1. <u>Form the Team</u>. This is covered in Chapter 1.
2. <u>Identify Capacity and Needs</u>. Chapters 2 and 3 detail how this can be accomplished.
3. <u>Set Schoolwide Goals</u>. Chapters 4 and 5 cover this process.
4. <u>Match Needs and Goals to Models</u>. Chapter 6 covers how to collect information on effective practices.
5. <u>Explore Models</u>. Chapter 6 serves as a helpful resource here as well.
6. <u>Select or Develop a Model</u>. Chapter 8 has tools for deciding upon courses of action.
7. <u>Develop Plans</u>. Chapter 9 covers several tools that are useful in the planning process.
8. <u>Allocate Resources</u>. Chapter 9 contains tools for generating budgets.
9. <u>Develop a Proposal</u>. Chapter 9, and the nine components of CSRD provide the structure needed to produce an effective plan, which will be the basis of a quality proposal. Model developers can also provide assistance. Adjustments should be made when proposal submission information is available.
10. <u>Implement, Reallocate and Recycle</u>. Chapter10 and Chapter 11 contain direction and the tools necessary to conduct these activities effectively.

Finally, there are a number of excellent resources for CSRD that are accessible online. The U. S. Department of Education's web site is helpful. The Regional Educational Laboratories have useful information on their sites. The Comprehensive Centers have beneficial information on their sites as well. Other organizations are also involved in CSRD and have produced important information. These resources can be accessed from the STAR Center site at http://www.rmcdenver.com/CSRD/CSRDHome.htm

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Forms

Form 1

Building Self Evaluation Team

Directions:

List the names and positions of the self-evaluation team below. Also, list each member's roles and responsibilities.

Representative Group	Individual Names
Teachers	
Families	
School Administrators	
Support Personnel (counselors, nurses, librarians, etc.)	
Other Staff (security personnel, custodians)	

Guidelines for Team Operations

Form 2

Summary Sheet for Taking Stock of Progress

Directions: Write two or three sentences that summarize your progress in each of the areas below.

Topic	Data Source	Major Patterns in the Data	Baseline Indicator

Form 3

Setting Goals for the Future

Goal Statement	Evidence to be Gathered

Form 4

Challenges And Needs

Where We Are Now	Where We Want To Be

Form 5

Anticipated Outcomes Worksheet

What You Want to Accomplish (Goals)	What You Will Do (Activities or Strategies)

Form 6

Information Collected on Effective Practices

Directions: List each effective practice that your team is exploring. In the section on description, include information about the following:
- ✓ **Goals of the strategy**
- ✓ **Students served**
- ✓ **Grade levels addressed**
- ✓ **Curricular focus**
- ✓ **Instructional practices**
- ✓ **Family/Community involvement**
- ✓ **School organization and climate**

List the advantages and disadvantages for your setting. Use multiple copies as necessary

Strategy	Description	Pros (Advantages)	Cons (Disadvantages)

Adapted from Temple University's Laboratory for Student Success website…www.reformhandbookLSS.org

Form 7

Parent Involvement Policy Checklist

How does your parent involvement policy measure up?

1. Is statement of purpose included in the policy?   Yes   No   Better do it!
2. Were parents involved in developing the policy?   Yes   No   Better do it!
3. Was an annual meeting held with the parents to explain the policy?   Yes   No   Better do it!
4. Is our school-parent compact mentioned in our parent involvement policy?   Yes   No   Better do it!
5. Did we mention assessing the needs of our community and matching programs to these needs in our policy?   Yes   No   Better do it!
6. Did we outline the process for staff-parent communication in our policy?   Yes   No   Better do it!
7. Do we have a districtwide Title I Advisory Committee with parent representatives – and is it mentioned in our parent involvement policy?   Yes   No   Better do it!

Form 8

Evaluating Your School-Parent Compact

- Our compact is attractive, not forbidding. Work.   Yes   No   Needs

- We have avoided using "legal" language. Work   Yes   No   Needs

- Our compact is readable and understandable. Work   Yes   No   Needs

- Our compact is substantive, but do-able. We Work   Yes   No   Needs
  have considered the constraint on parents,
  teachers, and families.

- Our compact is connected to actions that have Work   Yes   No   Needs
  a high probability of improving achievement.

- Our compact is written with equal responsibilities work   Yes   No   Needs
  for all participants.

Form 9

Action Plan for Developing Family/School/Community Partnerships

Area of parental involvement focus_____

Activity_____

Goal to be accomplished_____

What will be done?
What is the purpose of the activity?
Who will accomplish the activity?
When will they be done?
What resources or materials are needed?

What training needs to be provided?
How will we evaluate our success?
How will we communicate our plan to others?

Adapted from National PTA, *Building Successful Partnerships,* pp. 217-218.

Form 10

PMI Strategy

Directions: List each strategy in the first column. Summarize the results of the research listing the positive features and any other interesting or intriguing ideas. Finally, list what might be any challenging aspects of implementing the idea.

Strategy	Plus	Minus	Interesting

Form 11

Action Plan

Need: _____

Goal: _____

Strategy: _____

Evaluation: _____

Major Tasks	Who Is Responsible	Resources Needed	Timeline

Form 12

Investigating Sources for Combining Funds

The form below will help you explore additional options for funding your strategies. First, list the fund sources that you have in your school. Next, list the <u>required </u>uses and the <u>allowable</u> uses of those funds. The required uses are those elements mandated by law (e.g., services to migrant students). The allowable uses are those areas in which there is flexibility in expenditure of those funds (e.g., purchase of materials for staff development activities.)

Source:	Source:	Source:	Source:
Required: Allowable:	Required: Allowable:	Required: Allowable:	Required: Allowable:

Adapted from WestEd (1996)

Form 13

Coordinated Funding
Matching Funds to Strategies

Strategy to be funded	Possible funding source

Form 14

Budget Plan

Need: _____

Goal: _____

Strategy: _____

Evaluation: _____

Major Tasks	Resources Needed	Costs	Sources of Funding

Form 15

PINS Analysis

Goal:_____

Positive:

_____

Interesting:

_____

Negative:

_____

Suggestion:

_____

Form 15a

PINS Analysis for Strategies

Strategy:

Positive:

Interesting:

Negative:

Suggestion:

_____